

Report to: **EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT BOARD**

Date: 18 October 2022

Reporting Officer: Councillor Leanne Feeley – Executive Member for Education, Achievement and Equalities
Tim Bowman – Director of Education (Tameside and Stockport)

Subject: **SEND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION UPDATE**

Report Summary: Between 18 and 22 October 2021, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Tameside to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The outcome of the inspection was that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) is required because of significant areas of weakness in the area’s practice. Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector (HMCI) has also determined that the local authority and the area’s clinical commissioning group(s) (CCG) are jointly responsible for submitting the written statement to Ofsted.

This report will update on the current resource ask for delivery of the WSOA. This report also provides an update on the progress of the Written statement of Action, providing insight into our effectiveness in delivering the content of the plan against timescales. This report will also provide a highlight summary of the first Department of Education monitoring visit, which took place on the 28th September 2022.

Recommendations: Members are asked to:

1. Note the request for further resources to Executive Cabinet.
2. Note the summary of progress against the Written Statement of Action.
3. Note the summary of the first formal monitoring visit, which took place on the 28th September 2022.

Corporate Plan: Early identification of high quality support for children and young people with special education needs and / or disabilities is a vital part of our living well and starting well objectives.

Policy Implications: The recommendations support the Council’s SEND Strategy and starting well priority. Furthermore, they will ensure the Council is better able to meet its statutory obligations.

Financial Implications: The Written Statement of Action agreed action plan requires additional financial resources to deliver in addition to those identified in March 2022 Cabinet Report.

(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)

Description	One-Off	Continuing
Review of SEND offer content	9,000	2,250
Provision of local offer website	40,700	22,500
SEND quality first teaching CPD		1,200
SEND moderation of practice	3,000	2,000

SEND / inclusion review of practice	6,000	3,000
Provision of hard copy of Matching Provision to Needs document for all setting	4,000	
Total Additional Funding	62,700	30,950

There is not sufficient budget within the service to pay for the above identified, additional requirements. Despite this, Members have approved the request for additional funding in order to ensure that the Council's statutory duties in relation to SEND can be met. This additional funding request this will be built into the Council's Medium Term Financial plan.

Legal Implications:
(Authorised by the
Borough Solicitor)

There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report, which provides an update on the progress made to date and ongoing actions.

Risk Management:

Failure to meet statutory obligations in relation to SEND could result in poor outcomes for children and young people and significantly increase the risk of poor inspection outcomes for the Borough.

The drafting of the Written Statement of Action was overseen by the SEND Improvement Group. This group, reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board, includes senior officers from both the Council and CCG as well as Headteachers and Clinicians. The SEND

Improvement Group will continue to meet and will provide oversight of the delivery of this plan. In addition, formal oversight will be provided by the Education Attainment and Improvement Board (EAIB) as well as via regular updates to Executive Cabinet. Effective use of data will be essential and we will work closely with the Council's Transformation Team to achieve this.

Access to Information:

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

This report does not contain information, which warrants its consideration in the absence of the Press or members of the public.

Background Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Tim Bowman



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between 18 and 22 October 2021, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Tameside to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.
- 1.2 We received the findings report on 11 January 2022. A link to the report is available [here](#) and is also available on our [Local Offer webpage](#).
- 1.3 The outcome of the inspection was that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was required because of significant areas of weakness in the area's practice. Our initial WSOA was submitted on April 12th, but unfortunately was not accepted. In a feedback session, Ofsted advised us how to improve the plan, emphasising the need to ensure the WSOA contained more measurable metrics and outcomes and that the outcomes clearly demonstrated how our work would have a positive impact on children and families. The WSOA was redrafted with this guidance and submitted on 17 June 2022. We were very pleased when this second iteration was accepted on 1 July 2022. The local area were praised for the clear improvements noted in the second draft.
- 1.4 The final Written Statement of Action can be found [here](#).
- 1.5 On 23 March 2022, we presented a paper to Executive Cabinet, asking that the Strategic Commissioning Board and Cabinet:
 - Agree that the draft Written Statement of Action could be shared with DfE and NHS Improvement Advisors for final comment.
 - Agree that a recommendation be made to Council for an additional investment of £275k
 - Agree that a report be presented to the Strategic Commissioning Board seeking permission for an additional investment of £820k to provide adequate therapy provision and address waiting times for services including physiotherapy, occupational health and speech and language.
- 1.6 All the requests above were approved.
- 1.7 A further paper was submitted to Executive Cabinet on 28 September 2022 requesting a further resource commitment. The paper sets out the request for an additional £62,700, required as a one off cost in the first year, with a remaining £30,950 recurring annually. A more detailed breakdown of all resources required to deliver the WSOA can be found in the financial document [appended](#) to this report.

2. PROGRESS OF THE WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION

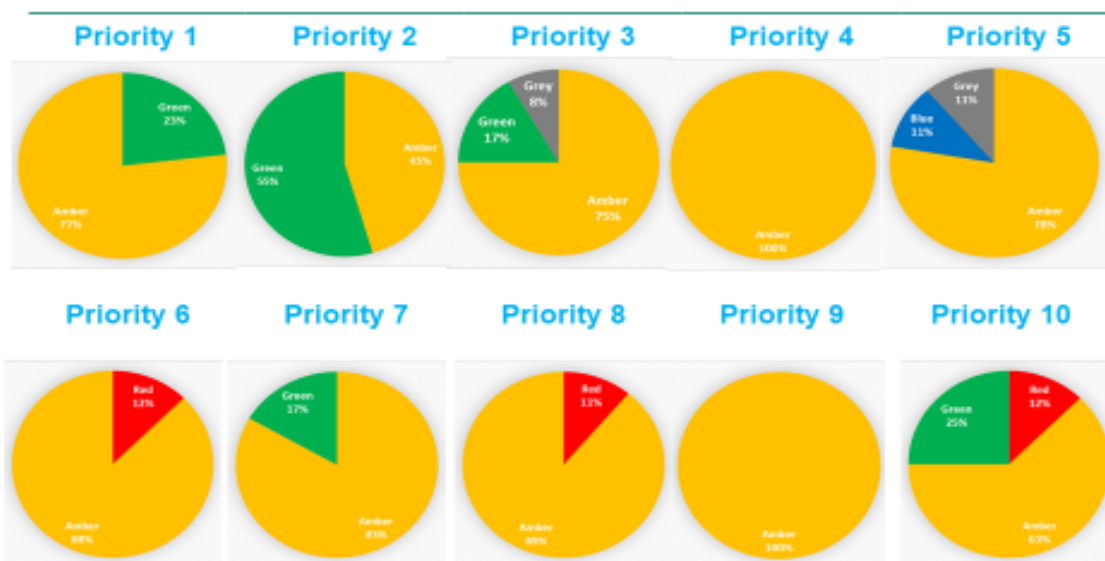
- 2.1 Highlights of the progress we have made so far are as follows:
 - a. An additional c.£1.5m of investment has been secured across both the LA and Health to deliver the Written Statement of Action and provide additional capacity across teams.
 - b. Co-produced rebranding, remarketing and reorganisation of Local Offer completed. This is due to go live October 2022.
 - c. We have co-produced a parent/carer survey with support from input from a range of services and parents/ carers. This survey went live on Friday 23rd September and will provide us with key baseline data, against which we can measure our progress and inform service design. The survey can be accessed by following this link. (<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SENDparentcarersurvey>). We are monitoring responses to the survey and within 48 hours had received 180 responses and hope to receive 3-500 over the period it is open,
 - d. The SEND assessment team Business Process Review has now been completed and the findings have been reported to Executive Cabinet, with recommendations for

- resourcing implementation underway. The Business Process Review has already led to improvements in the capture and use of data, supporting service improvement.
- We have scheduled our first parent/carer drop-in sessions. These are question and answer sessions where parents/ carers have the opportunity to speak directly with SEND officers and staff from across education, health and social care, raising questions and sharing their concerns. The first session is due to be held 14 October 2022 (due to be held 19/09/22 re-arranged due to additional bank holiday)
 - The SEND Improvement Group Terms of Reference (ToR) have now been updated and project management structure and processes agreed along with Tracking reporting on progress.
 - With specific reference to Health progress, additional investment has been secured for CAMHS, the Neurodevelopmental Pathways and Health Therapy Services (OT, SALT, Physio, Dietetics and Paediatrics)
 - There are now new support services in place for families in the process of neurodevelopment assessment/ and post assessment.
 - The health Navigator Service is now in place and the feedback from parents is extremely positive.
 - The Health Preparation for Adulthood Strategic Lead has been appointed
 - Health audits and a comprehensive CPD programme is now underway
 - We are working with customer Service teams to understand how we capture long term trends on complaints and feedback as changes become embedded across all services.
 - Recruitment is well underway for dedicated Project Management support and Designated Social Care Officer. The job descriptions have been written and evaluated. These are both crucial roles in the successful and efficient delivery of the Written Statement of Action.

2.2 Overall Progress of the Written Statement of Action

We are making encouraging progress in the delivery of the Written Statement of Action. 88% of actions are green or amber, whilst only 3% of actions are red. 4% of the actions are not yet started, but planned start dates will allow us to ensure these actions remain on target. Please see below, an overview of progress. Blue indicates where an action is complete and positive impact is being observed. Grey indicates an action not yet commenced.

Status by Priority



2.3 As you can see from the charts above, we have actions rated as red in three areas. These have been rated as red as they are behind schedule. The actions currently rated as red are as follows:

New Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) role implemented

This action is currently rated red as the DSCO was scheduled to be implemented by September 2022. As this is a new role to the authority, it was necessary to write a new job description and person specification and complete a job evaluation. These processes created some delay in implementation, but the implementation is progressing. This is a vital role in terms of WSOA delivery, and it remains imperative to complete this appointment process as quickly and efficiently as possible.

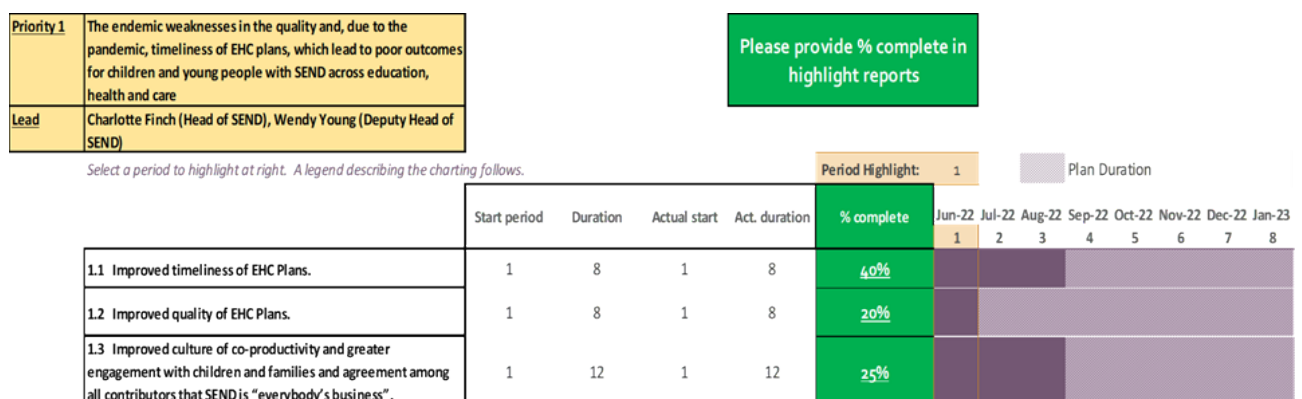
Offer training for all schools on Whole School SEND practice as part of a SEND ‘training passport’ programme.

This action is currently marked red, as this training programme was offered to the LA by the Department for Education whilst the WSOA was being drafted, but has since become unavailable. A meeting with the Department for Education has been scheduled for Monday 3rd October, where an alternative programme will be agreed. This action is therefore likely to turn amber or green following that meeting.

Source training opportunities for young adults through liaison with Department for Education and National Development Team for Inclusion, with emphasis on Preparation for Adulthood.

This action is currently marked red as it is behind schedule. A meeting with the Department for Education, scheduled for September had to be cancelled, as LA officers were participating in an ADASS peer challenge inspection on the day arranged. A further meeting with the Department for Education and the National Development Team for Inclusion to discuss support options and an implementation schedule has been arranged. This action is therefore likely to turn amber or green following that meeting.

2.4 We are in the process of developing a dynamic GANT chart, which will allow up to date and detailed oversight of all actions, including planned start and finish dates. This will form an additional part of our SENDIG tracking and highlight reporting from October 2022. The screengrab below demonstrates how the GANT chart will support us in monitoring progress and delivery:



2.5 **Next Steps**

We have a number of crucial actions to be delivered over the coming weeks and months, including:

- The Child and young person survey, due to go live in October
- The Parent / Carer consultation sessions, which will commence in October
- The refreshed Local Offer, which is due to go live in October

- The Complaints prioritisation exercise, which has been commenced, and will shortly provide us with a key baseline measure, against which we hope to show improvement
- The recruitment of DSCO and PM remains a high priority

3. OVERVIEW OF THE FIRST SEND MONITORING VISIT

3.1 Our first formal monitoring visit from the Department for Education and NHS England, took place on September 28th. The purpose of the visit is to determine whether the local area has made sufficient progress in addressing the areas of significant weakness detailed in the WSOA. Each visit is followed by the issue of a letter from the Department of Education and NHS England, appraising progress and it may also identify any other significant weaknesses identified during the visit.

3.2 The team conducting our first visit was made up of two Dept for Education advisors, Jess Haslam and Gareth Llewellyn, and Janet Wray, NW Regional SEND Lead for NHS England.

3.3 Whilst at the time of drafting this report, we had not yet received the post-visit letter, verbal feedback given immediately following the meeting indicates that the meeting was positive and that the visiting team were satisfied with the progress reported. It did not appear, based on verbal feedback provided, that any additional weaknesses had been identified. The team were however able to provide helpful advice and guidance on how to prepare for the next monitoring visit, which is scheduled for December 5th. This is set out below:

- Focus on how the actions are having an impact on children and young people. There was a clear, communicated expectation that by December we will be in a position to report positive impact on children, young people and families.
- Ensure to clearly identify all barriers, so that solutions can be explored and implemented
- Provide all appropriate data-sets and ensure data is up to date and accurate
- ensure baselines are established for all priorities, so that future progress can be effectively measured
- Provide the Annual Review recovery plan
- Provide the Timeliness Recovery plan
- Ensure the Department for Education preparation template is maintained and kept up to date. This is the document used by the Department for Education and NHS England to report our progress to more senior staff at the Department for Education; as such it is our best opportunity to report our successes, but also to transparently identify and remove barriers in a timely manner.

3.4 In light of this feedback, and based on the experience preparing for this visit, we have resolved to:

- Amend our own preparation process
- Revise the template used for priority leads to report to SENDIG. These reports inform the report for the monitoring visit. This will allow for more seamless visit preparation and data collection and more effectively provide the data and information requested.
- Expedite completion of all baseline data for each priority
- Report the outcome of the visit to all priority leads, providing them with the new SENDIG template for completion and advising them which data to include and the likely and known areas of focus.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 There has been an additional resource request to Executive Cabinet for a further £62,700, required as a one off cost in the first year, with a remaining £30,950 recurring annually.

- 4.2 We are making good progress in delivery of the Written statement of Action, with only 3% of actions slightly behind scheduled. These actions, whilst delayed, are in progress and likely to be completed imminently.
- 4.3 The first SEND monitoring visit took place on 28th September and initial verbal feedback indicates that the visit was positive and that the Department for Education and NHS England are satisfied with current progress. In due course we will receive written feedback from the Department for Education and NHS England, which will provide more detailed insights into their assessment of our performance and progress.

5 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 As set out at the front of the report.