

## **Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:** 28 September 2020

**Report Title:** Progress Against the SEND Written Statement of Action

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Kathryn Flavell, Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

**Senior Officer:** Mark Palethorpe, Executive Director of People

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### **1. Report Summary**

- 1.1. This report provides an update to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress against the areas in our Written Statement of Action (WSOA) from the SEND Inspection in March 2018.
- 1.2. Good progress continues to be made against the WSOA.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
  - Note the progress to date against the SEND Written Statement of Action (WSOA) as described in the accompanying SEND progress reports.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1. This report ensures that the Committee are updated on SEND improvement work and have the opportunity to provide relevant support and challenge around improvements relating to SEND, in line with the SEND Written Statement of Action.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1. Not applicable – delivery of our SEND Written Statement of Action was a requirement of the local area following the previous Ofsted and CQC SEND Local Area Inspection in March 2018.

## 5. Background

- 5.1 In March 2018, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) carried out a joint local area inspection of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Cheshire East. This inspection looked at how effectively partners in Cheshire East work together to identify, assess and meet the needs of children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND to improve their outcomes.
- 5.2 The inspection highlighted strengths and areas for development in the local area's arrangements in relation to children and young people with SEND in Cheshire East.
- 5.3 Highlighted strengths included well-established and strong relationships between leaders that facilitate joint working, and a shared vision to improve outcomes for children and young people in Cheshire East. The Cheshire East Toolkit for SEND and a number of local services, such as the Early Years Complex Care Team, the Children with Disabilities Team and the Cheshire East Autism Team, were also identified as strengths.
- 5.4 However, the inspection outcome letter stated that while there are significant strengths in Cheshire East, there were also two areas of weakness. As a result, the area of Cheshire East was required to produce and submit a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) to Ofsted that explains what the local area is doing to address the following areas of significant weakness:
- Area 1 - the timeliness, process and quality of education, health and care (EHC) plans
  - Area 2 - the lack of an effective autism spectrum disorder (ASD) pathway and unreasonable waiting times.
- 5.5 The Written Statement of Action was considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board in July 2018 and was subsequently deemed fit for purpose by Ofsted in October 2018. Members of the 0-25 SEND Partnership have since focused on delivery of the WSOA Action Plan through a number of focused workstreams.
- 5.6 Progress against the Written Statement of Action has been monitored by the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England and Improvement (NHSE/I) on a quarterly basis since September 2018.
- 5.7 Updates on SEND developments arising from the 0-25 SEND Partnership are regularly provided through our 'SENDing you the news' webpage [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/sendingyouthenews](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/sendingyouthenews)

- 5.8 Significant progress has been made in improving SEND services since the inspection. The reports included within the appendices detail the progress made to date against the WSOA.

## **6 Implications of the Recommendations**

### **6.1 Legal Implications**

- 6.1.1 Delivery of our SEND Written Statement of Action was a requirement of the local area following the previous Ofsted and CQC SEND Local Area Inspection in March 2018.

### **6.2 Finance Implications**

- 6.2.1 The Council has invested in the SEND service in response to the increased demand on the service over the last two years and keeps this under review to ensure the service can meet its legal requirements.

### **6.3 Policy Implications**

- 6.3.1 There are no policy implications for this report.

### **6.4 Equality Implications**

- 6.4.1 The actions outlined within our WSOA for SEND are focused on improving experiences and outcomes for Cheshire East children and young people with SEND, and their families.

### **6.5 Human Resources Implications**

- 6.5.1 The changes to the SEND service and increase in management capacity to support improvements are detailed within the progress reports.

### **6.6 Risk Management Implications**

- 6.6.1 There are no risk management implications for this report.

### **6.7 Rural Communities Implications**

- 6.7.1 There are no rural implications for this report.

### **6.8 Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children**

- 6.8.1 The actions outlined within our WSOA for SEND are focused on improving experiences and outcomes for Cheshire East children and young people with SEND.

## **6.9 Public Health Implications**

6.9.1 There are no public health implications for this report.

## **6.10 Climate Change Implications**

6.10.1 There are no climate change implications for this report.

## **7 Ward Members Affected**

7.1 The improvement actions described in our WSOA for SEND apply equally to all children and young people with SEND in Cheshire East, and their families, and therefore any impact is borough wide.

## **8 Consultation & Engagement**

8.1 Feedback from a wide range of professionals across education, health and care and members of the public (including parent carers) contributed to the development of the SEND Written Statement of Action and the Action Plan within it.

8.2 We are continuing to use both data and feedback as a measure of the impact of our improvement actions.

8.3 There are numerous consultation and engagement activities with parent carers, young people and professionals throughout the year in relation to SEND improvements, and the SEND Partnership's Communication and Engagement Working Group manages a calendar of all ongoing consultation and engagement events and activities.

## **9 Access to Information**

9.1 Four supporting reports which provide an update of progress against the SEND WSOA have been included alongside this report.

9.2 The Local Area Inspection Report from March 2018, along with the WSOA, is published on the Council's website at:

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities/send-developments/cheshire-east-local-area-send-inspection.aspx>

## **10 Contact Information**

10.1 Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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