



Northumberland County Council

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 February 2020

SEND: Progress Update on the Written Statement of Action

Report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Children's Services, Cath McEvoy-Carr

Cabinet Member for Children's Services: Councillor Wayne Daley

Purpose of report

This report is to update the committee on the progress that is being made on the Written Statement of Action received following Northumberland's SEND inspection in October 2018 and to provide an overview of the draft Joint Commissioning strategy and associated action plan.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 1) Note the contents of the report;
- 2) Recognise the ongoing developments and identify any potential issues for further consideration if appropriate;
- 3) Note the SEND draft Joint Commissioning Strategy and Action Plan.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the 'We want you to achieve and realise your potential (Learning)' and 'We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for (Living)' priorities included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2021.

FACS January 2020

Key Issues

- 1) Northumberland's Written Statement of Action was approved in March 2019 by Ofsted and CQC as being fit for purpose in addressing the areas highlighted as requiring improvement following the local area SEND inspection.

- 2) Northumberland's response to the outcomes of the SEND inspection is being monitored by quarterly visits from the DfE and NHS England. There have been two monitoring visits where NCC and Northumberland CCG were able to provide positive assurance that the Written Statement of Action improvement plan was on course and delivering the necessary improvements.

Background

Following the Local Area SEND inspection in October 2018, Northumberland County Council and Northumberland CCG were required to produce a Written Statement of Action that explains how the following areas of development will be addressed:

1. Weaknesses in the local area's arrangements for jointly planning, commissioning and providing the services children and young people with SEND and their families need.
2. The graduated response to identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND is not embedded in mainstream primary and secondary schools.
3. The poor outcomes achieved by children and young people with SEND and weaknesses in successfully preparing them for their adult lives.

The [Written Statement of Action](#) was [approved](#) in March 2019 and is being monitored through quarterly visits from DfE and NHS England. Northumberland will receive a re-visit from CQC and Ofsted approximately eighteen months from the date the Written Statement of Action was approved in March 2019.

To date there have been three monitoring visits and this report provides an update regarding the outcome of the most recent monitoring visit on 4th November 2019.

Outcome of November Monitoring Visit

Northumberland County Council and Northumberland CCG were able to provide positive assurance on the progress being made to address the three areas of weakness highlighted in the SEND inspection.

Northumberland's arrangements for joint commissioning as identified and outlined in the SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (appendix 2) and the draft SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy (appendix 3) were discussed and the positive progress in this area was acknowledged. The draft Strategy was positively received and it was noted that it was based on a robust SEND specific JSNA which showed a greater

understanding of the needs of the 0-25 SEND population. Key next steps identified include seeking approval for the strategy and the delivery of the actions within the joint commissioning strategy.

The Committee is requested to note the Joint Commissioning Strategy and the Action Plan contained within it.

In relation to improving the graduated response in mainstream schools, it was acknowledged that a significant amount of work has been undertaken to support, empower and challenge schools to deliver inclusive educational practice.

In particular, the following was acknowledged:

- Support from NCC to SENCOs is effective as evidenced through the annual SENCO working conditions and confidence survey. This indicated that SENCOs value the advice, support and resources available from NCC and report that it positively impacts on their practice;
- The graduated response is improving in mainstream schools as evidenced by an audit of SEN Support Plans through SEND Panel. This showed that the SEN Support Plan is more widely used across schools and the quality of graduated approach being evidenced in schools is improving;
- The positive impact of School Improvement Service as evidenced by school Improvement Partners (SIP) Summer Reports showing improved consistency in the graduated response across schools.

NCC and the CCG were able to provide positive assurance around the progress being made towards improving outcomes and preparing children and young people for adulthood. Highlights of developments delivered include:

- An increase in reading, writing and maths outcomes at KS1 and KS2 for SEND support and EHCP learners from 2018 to 2019 (except KS1 reading);
- A reduction in fixed term and permanent exclusions for children and young people with SEND;
- The development of the SEND Local Area Outcomes Framework is underway. Northumberland and Hounslow are two national pilot sites who have been selected to employ a performance-based accountability approach to monitoring area outcomes. This work is being facilitated by NDTi (National Development Team for Inclusion) and the initial stage of the work has been completed.

Overall feedback from the monitoring visit acknowledged the significant amount of work undertaken. It was noted that the continued progress appears fixed in:

- The support across partners
- The identification of providers as pivotal in achieving success and their level of engagement
- The continued engagement from elected members and their role in challenge

IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

Policy:	Developments detailed within the report outline steps being made towards strategic objectives.
Finance and value for money:	Efficient systems and processes within SEND underpin the transparent and equitable allocation of SEND finances. Currently there is no need for additional funding.
Legal:	The SEND Code of Practice places a number of statutory requirements on Local Authorities and CCGs.
Procurement:	n/a
Human Resources:	n/a
Property:	Capacity planning for the provision of specialist educational placements may involve capital development.
Equalities: (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	SEND promotes the inclusion of children and young people within their schools and communities.
Risk Assessment:	There is a risk that services will not be effective or efficient if the governance and strategy is not robustly monitored.
Crime & Disorder:	Youth Offending and SEND populations overlap.
Customer Considerations:	The views of children, young people and their parents / carers are central to developments and improvements within SEND.
Carbon Reduction:	SEND school transport arrangements are linked.
Wards:	n/a

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Outcome of Northumberland Local Area SEND inspection](#)

Appendix 1: Letter from Nadhim Zahawi MP Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

Appendix 2: SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Appendix 3: Draft Joint Commissioning Strategy

Report sign off.

	Full name of officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Liam Henry
Service Director of Finance & Interim Section 151 Officer	Alison Elsdon
Relevant Executive Director	Cath McEvoy-Carr
Chief Executive	Daljit Lally
Portfolio Holder(s)	Wayne Daley

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