

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

2nd May 2023

LOCAL AREA SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES STRATEGY

Report by the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed Local Area SEND Strategy which has been developed in partnership with North Yorkshire Council, North Yorkshire and Humber ICB, Bradford and Craven ICB, Education settings, Parent Carer Voice and other key stakeholders.
- 1.2 This paper therefore sets out key information on the development of the proposed Local Area SEND Strategy and seeks to gain Executive approval of its content.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 In recent years there have been a number of strategies and plans in place covering the county of North Yorkshire, which related to, or included intentions, actions and reference to, children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 2.2 The most recent specific Council plan is the Strategic Plan for SEND Education Provision 2018-23 which was updated in May 2020 and is expiring in September 2023. With the impending expiration of the existing SEND plan, it was agreed that a new Local Area strategy for SEND that identifies key priorities for education, health and social care for children and young people aged 0-25 should be developed.
- 2.3 Recent developments for partners and stakeholders reinforce the timeliness of the implementation of an overarching strategy and the opportunity to do this.

These include:

- Establishment of the new North Yorkshire Council
- Release of the national SEND Improvement Plan
- Recent review of Social Care support for Disabled Children
- The implementation of Integrated Care Systems.

- The relaunch of the North Yorkshire parent/carer forum and the rebrand as Parent Carer Voice North Yorkshire, with a strong focus on co-production.

2.4 The steps to developing our Local Area Strategy have included:

- Considering our statutory duties and guidance across education, health and social care
- Reviewing strategies and plans already in existence to ensure this will compliment those
- Learning opportunities which have taken place e.g. Council OFSTED inspections; development of the SEND self-evaluation framework; peer challenge work; National College Programme events across CYPS; High Needs Block Recovery workshop and the Joint Commissioning working group.
- Available data and information in respect of SEND and current gaps
- 6 week period of informal stakeholder engagement jointly commissioned by NYC and NHS and hosted by Council for Disabled Children
- 7 week formal consultation exercise on earlier proposals with amendments since made

2.5 The proposed Strategy document (appendix 2) sets out our ambition, our partnership and vision as well as a focus upon five key strategic priorities in response to feedback as well as consideration of our statutory duties.

2.6 This paper therefore sets out key information on the development of the proposed Local Area SEND Strategy and seeks to gain Executive approval of its content.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In recent years there have been a number of strategies and plans in place covering the county of North Yorkshire, which related to, or included intentions, actions and reference to, children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

3.2 These strategies in recent years have included the following:

- North Yorkshire County Council Plan 2019-22
- Being Young in North Yorkshire 2021-2024
- Strategic Plan for SEND Education Provision 0-25 2018-23
- School improvement Strategy 2019-21
- Learning disabilities strategy 2017 -2022

3.3 The most recent specific Council plan is the Strategic Plan for SEND Education Provision 2018-23 which was updated in May 2020 and is expiring in September

2023. With the impending expiration of the existing SEND plan, it was agreed that a new Local Area strategy for SEND that identifies key priorities for education, health and social care for children and young people aged 0-25 should be developed to help strengthen our partnership working with health and social care.

3.4 Recently there have been a number of pieces of work which have highlighted areas of development for children and young people with SEND across partners and stakeholders. More detail on these are provided in the sections below. These have now been drawn together to form the proposed Local Area SEND Strategy. This will ensure that:

- The work that is being, or needs to be, done to ensure children and young people in North Yorkshire with SEND have the best opportunities, provision and outcomes, is agreed, understood, delivered and monitored.
- Children and young people with SEND and their families in partnership with those working with them from education, health and social care can shape the way forward.

3.5 In addition, recent developments for partners and stakeholders reinforce the timeliness of the implementation of an overarching strategy and the opportunity to do this. These include:

- Establishment of the new North Yorkshire Council
- Release of the national SEND Improvement Plan
- Recent review of Social Care support for Disabled Children
- The implementation of Integrated Care Systems.
- The relaunch of the North Yorkshire parent/carer forum and the rebrand as Parent Carer Voice North Yorkshire, with a strong focus on co-production.

3.6 These developments have a significant bearing upon improving the lived experience of young people with SEND and the proposed strategy.

4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

4.1 A frequent message from parents/carers of children and young people with SEND, and other stakeholders is that it is essential that those working in education, health and social care work together to meet children and young people's needs. This was a view expressed during the development of the Strategic Plan for SEND Education Provision 2018-23, particularly through formal consultation.

4.2 More recent feedback, from a period of engagement facilitated by the Council for Disabled Children, shows that there are mixed views on how services work with children and young people with SEND and their families, and how they work together to support them. The summary of this engagement is included in Appendix 1.

4.3 The steps to developing our Local Area Strategy have included:

- Considering our statutory duties and guidance across education, health and social care
- Reviewing strategies and plans already in existence to ensure this will compliment those
- Learning opportunities which have taken place e.g. LA OFSTED inspections; development of the SEND self-evaluation framework; the peer challenge; National College Programme events across CYPS; High Needs Block Recovery workshop and the Joint Commissioning working group.
- Available data and information in respect of SEND and current gaps
- 6 week period of informal stakeholder engagement jointly commissioned by NYC and NHS and hosted by Council for Disabled Children
- 7 week formal consultation exercise on earlier proposals with amendments since made

4.4 Through the engagement work and consultation a number of themes were apparent that have informed the development of the proposals. These were:

What is important for children and young people with SEND:

- Being cared for and valued, having meaningful friendships and being valued by supporting adults
- Being healthy, resilient, having confidence and a sense of purpose
- Sharing a range of experiences, enjoying learning and achievements being celebrated
- Developing independence, being involved in decisions and having meaningful prospects of employment in adult life
- Being safe
- Services are proactive in meeting need with a focus on early intervention
- Smooth transitions into adulthood

What needs further improvement?

- Communication at strategic and operational levels
- Improved Local Offer
- More seamless exchange of information between services and families
- Greater range and availability of local provision
- Increased range of social opportunities for CYP with SEND
- Knowledge, training and understanding of staff to continue to support children within mainstream settings
- Timeliness and quality of assessment processes, in particular, agreed outcomes and annual reviews

- Early and proactive support needs to be a focus for all services
- 4.5 Whilst undertaking the complex work of developing the strategy a conscious pause was taken in anticipation of the long awaited release of the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan by the Department for Education. Whilst this has meant some delay, it has ensured that the strategy proposed is aligned to this significant shift in national policy as well as responding to local needs and feedback.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 Appendix 2 provides a comprehensive designed draft of the Local Area SEND strategy. This section sets out the key content within it.
- 5.2 As we have developed our strategy, we have proposed the following principals will assist us in responding to the needs of our children as well as promoting effective and positive partnership working. The shared principles we will work to in order to make a positive difference are to:
- Be ambitious for all children
 - Value the contribution of all partners
 - Work together to deliver improvement
 - Listen and communicate effectively
 - Invest in relationships
- 5.3 The proposed Strategy document (appendix 2) also sets out our ambition, our partnership and vision as well as a focus upon five key strategic priorities in response to the feedback we have had as well as consideration of our statutory duties. Our proposed strategic priorities are set out below and a summary of why they are important:

Identifying the needs of children and young people early

We know that identifying the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at an early stage improves outcomes and life chances. Across Education, Health and Care services in North Yorkshire improving early identification systems will remain a key focus so that children can access the support they need as they need it.

Working together- Improving communication, co-production and engagement

We want as many children and young people with SEND to receive the right support from health, education and care services to meet their needs. Good communication is important so that children and young people, parents and carers feel listened to, their views inform decisions and that transparency develops trust across all partners. Parents have told us that clear communication is of high importance.

Improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND

Our ambition is that children and young people with SEND have the best opportunity to live healthy and happy lives and are supported to have high aspirations and achieve their goals. Helping children and young people to achieve outcomes in education, health, employment, relationships and participation in society is central to this vision.

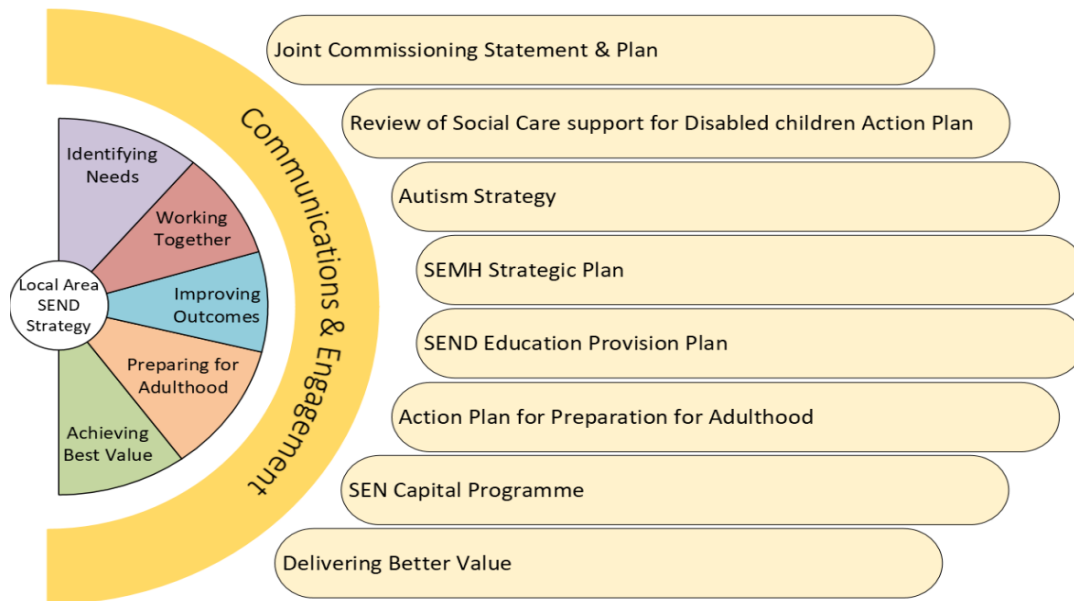
Preparing Young People for Adulthood

Developing independence and preparing for adulthood is important to young people and their families. Done well and at the earliest stages it allows children and young people to develop skills that will serve them well throughout their lives. Through engagement it was clear from feedback that it is important for children and young people to feel they make a valuable contribution in their communities, that their talents and skills are recognised and supported and that this in turn develops self-esteem and supports them in maintaining high aspirations.

Achieving Best Value

The Local Authority and the National Health Service have a statutory duty to meet the assessed needs of all children with SEND in North Yorkshire. Alongside this duty is an expectation that statutory bodies utilise public finances efficiently and effectively. It is important that all stakeholders understand what resources are available, that they are used to best effect for all children and the local system is sustainable.

- 5.4 The strategy will provide all statutory and non-statutory partners with a clear and agreed direction of travel and assist services from all organisations to coordinate and shape their planning. Below is a diagram which illustrates the relationship between the proposed strategy and other key action plans and strategic documents used by services.



6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The financial implications to this proposed strategy are intended to create more opportunities for joint commissioning of services between partners and to ensure that resources available are used efficiently. It is anticipated that taking forward these proposals would improve support and outcomes without incurring additional financial pressure than would otherwise be expected from growth in demand.
- 6.2 One of the five priorities, Achieving Best Value, has been included in acknowledgment of the importance for all children and young people with SEND that the local area strives to achieve a sustainable SEND system.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Throughout the development of the strategy, consideration has been given to the statutory duties of Education, Health and Social Care services. The strategy will have a positive effect upon the duty for those statutory services, set out in the Children and Families Act 2014, and other acts of parliament covering education, health and social care, to work in partnership and ensure the lived experience of children and young people with SEND is improved.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The adoption of the proposed strategy and the work underpinning it will have a positive impact for those children and young people with SEND. It is not envisaged that it will present any adverse impact against any of the protected characteristics.
- 8.2 The Council will continue to pay due regard, and as individual projects are developed further, there will be individual equality impact assessment developed.

8.3 The Equalities Impact Assessment screening tool has been completed and included in appendix 3.

9. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 It is not anticipated that the strategy will have any notable climate impact.

10. NEXT STEPS

10.1 The proposed next steps, subject to approval from the Executive, are to:

- Seek formal approval from the Place Operational Delivery Group within North Yorkshire and Humber ICB and Bradford and Craven ICB
- Seek approval at Full Council on 17th May for adoption and implementation of the approved strategy

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 That Executive consider and note the content of this report and the strategy document provided

11.2 That the Executive approve the content of the strategy and the next steps outlined to seek formal approval and adoption at the upcoming meeting of the full council on 17th May

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Report prepared by Chris Reynolds - Head of SEND Strategic Planning and Resources

Date: 21 April 2023

List of Appendices

Appendix 1. Engagement and consultation summary report

Appendix 2. Local Area Strategy document

Appendix 3. Equalities Impact Assessment screening tool