
Cabinet

12 March 2024

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND): Area SEND Inspection Initial Briefing on the Outcomes and Next Steps

Comments from Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

Summary

Members of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee were invited to provide initial comments on the Inspection Report and Next Steps for consideration by Cabinet.

The areas raised are:

- It is important to have a full action plan in place and corresponding cost and resource implications so that what is required to deliver improved services is clear and understood.
- Acknowledge the areas identified for improvement by the Send and Alternative Provision Partnership as part of the SEND Improvement Plan that the Committee scrutinised in November 2023.
- Highlight the areas of improvement identified for health partners including 'waiting well' arrangements and gaps in service provision and the importance of these areas being addressed in the SEND Improvement Plan, alongside those areas under the Local Authority's responsibility, to ensure they are progressed through the Local Area Partnership as a priority.
- Question whether the revenue increase of £1.6m is sufficient given the Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) recovery proposals identify costs of £1.8m. It is recognised that this is to manage the current backlog, but it is important to have increased long-term resources to manage the increasing demand.
- Question whether £1m to enable better mainstream school access for SEND pupils is sufficient.
- Recognising the current shortage of SEND places across the county and the expected requirement of an additional 300 places, the Committee asks whether the £20.2m SEND Capital Budget will be adequate.
- A need for clarity on how the Delivering Better Value Funding is assisting in reducing costs relating to rising demand and what outcomes will be achieved from the 2-year funding.

- The Committee highlights the importance of thorough scrutiny of the action plan and the updated SEND improvement Plan to assess how the areas of improvement identified in the Inspection Report are being addressed.

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