

Subject:	FINAL Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2021 – 2026		
Date of Meeting:	Children, Young People and Skills Committee 9 November 2020		
Report of:	Deb Austin Interim Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The report provides an analysis of the feedback from the recent consultation of the city's draft new SEND Strategy.
- 1.2 The committee to note and endorse the new final SEND Strategy (Appendix 1).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That CYPS committee note the feedback from the consultation and endorse the final SEND Strategy which includes a new timescale for delivery.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The purpose of the city's SEND strategy 2021-2026 is to deliver on a city-wide agreed vision for the commissioning and delivery of SEND services, providing a framework against which provision can be measured and improved.
- 3.2 After an extensive co-production process with a range of stakeholders, the draft SEND strategy was presented to the CYPS Committee on the 15 June 2020 for the committee to note the draft strategy and the planned wider consultation process. The aim of the consultation was to ensure that we had captured the voice of the wider SEND community in the final document.
- 3.3 The consultation process started on the 19 June 2020 and finished on the 18 September 2020. It was facilitated through a survey monkey published on the Brighton and Hove City Council Website. The weblink was widely publicised through a range of partner agencies and internal networks listed below:
 - PaCC
 - Amaze
 - Clinical Commissioning Group

- Head teachers
- SENDCos
- FCL Comms

3.4 In addition to the survey monkey, there has been a focussed piece of work with the BAME Community undertaken by PaCC, Amaze, A Seat at the Table and the Hangleton and Knoll Project. A report captured feedback from an online survey (completed by 60 BAME families and sent to 500+ families on the Compass Disability Register) and a series of one to one semi-structured phone interviews with 25 families from various communities and ethnic backgrounds.

3.5 Two focus groups were organised for councillors so that members had an opportunity to consider the draft SEND Strategy in more detail, ask questions of officers and provide feedback on the document.

3.6 Once the consultation had finished, the feedback was collated and key reoccurring themes identified. A group of key partners that comprised representatives from the CCG, local authority and PaCC and Amaze met on the 23 September 2020 to consider the feedback and propose a series of amendments to the draft that reflected the views submitted through the survey. PaCC have also further consulted their steering group. Amendments are highted in Appendix 1 in Final SEND Strategy.

3.7 Summary of the feedback

3.8 There were 59 respondents to the survey and 2 email submissions, one from the Safeguarding and Care team within the local authority and the other from the Clinical Commissioning Group. The feedback from the BAME community and Councillors have also been included.

3.9 The table below sets out the category of respondent alongside the corresponding % of the total response rate.

How are you responding to this consultation?				
		Frequency	Percent	*Valid Percent
Valid	A Brighton & Hove resident	6	10.2	10.2
	A parent or guardian of a child affected by the draft strategy	27	45.8	45.8
	A teacher or head teacher at one of Brighton & Hove's SEND schools	3	5.1	5.1
	A teacher or head teacher at another of Brighton & Hove's schools	7	11.9	11.9
	Support staff at one of Brighton & Hove's SEND schools	3	5.1	5.1
	A local stakeholder or representative of a local business, community or voluntary group	6	10.2	10.2
	Other	7	11.9	11.9
	Total	59	100.0	100.0

*Valid % means that 'no response' to a question is removed from the equation. All % referred to in the report are valid %.

3.10 The 'Other' category consisted of:

- Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service (SLT representation)
- Staff in Children's services
- Representative from the Supported Employment Team BHCC
- Vice-Chair Governors, West Blatchington Nursery and Primary School
- Parent of a disabled child and a stakeholder in a voluntary organisation

3.11 There were 14 overarching questions in total. Questions 1a and 1b focussed on the vision and ambition of the SEND Strategy. In total, 91.4% of the respondents either strongly agreed or tended to agree with the vision and ambition set out for the strategy. Therefore, the wording has remained the same as in the draft strategy.

3.12 Questions 2a to 13b were about each of the six priorities:

- Inclusion
- Early Identification and Intervention
- SEND Pathways
- Achievement and Outcomes
- Transition and Preparing for the Future
- SEND Sufficiency

Each priority had the following set of questions:

- a) Do you agree or disagree that **Priority** is an issue for children, young people with SEND, adults with learning disabilities and for their families in the city? (Quantitative measure)
- b) Why do you agree or disagree that **Priority** is an issue? (Qualitative measure)
- c) Do you agree or disagree that the actions set out in this priority area will make a positive change for those with SEND in the city? (Quantitative measure)
- d) Why do you agree or disagree that the actions set out in this priority area will make a positive change? (Qualitative measure)
- e) Do you feel anything is missing from the strategy for this priority area? (Qualitative measure)

The full data set for the quantitative measures and a summary of the comments for each of the qualitative measures are included within Appendix 2.

3.13 Quantitative data

3.14 It was clear from the quantitative data across all priorities that between 80% and 95% of respondents strongly agreed or tended to agree that these are priority issues for children, young people with SEND, adults with learning disabilities and for their families in the city. Therefore, it has been decided by the core stakeholder group that the six priorities remain as they are and no changes have been made.

3.15 In terms of question (c), between 59% and 70% either strongly agreed or tended to agree that the actions set out in that priority area will make a positive change for those with SEND in the city. However, between 18% and 28% neither agreed or disagreed with the statement with less than 10% of respondents tending to disagree or strongly disagree with the proposed actions. The only anomaly was Priority 2: Early Identification and Intervention - where 14% of respondents tended to disagree and 2% strongly disagreed.

3.16 Qualitative data

3.17 There were a number of themes that came through the qualitative data. These were the following:

- Training on a range of issues
- Funding
- Covid19
- Assistive technology
- Engagement with harder to reach communities such as BAME, LGBTQ+
- Waiting lists for a range of health services
- A whole family approach with particular focus on siblings of children and young people with SEND and young carers
- Support for parents/carers to navigate the system
- Acknowledgement of care status
- Better communication between all agencies and with the SEND Community
- Post 16 and post 19 provision and services
- Representation of the voluntary sector

3.18 The above have now been incorporated into the final SEND Strategy either through amending an existing action or by adding a new one (see Appendix 1 – all additions and amendments in **bold**).

3.19 Respondents were asked ‘How much do you agree or disagree with the proposals for the governance of the SEND Strategy?’. In total, 58.5% either strongly agreed or tended to agree with the governance arrangements. However, a large percentage, 30%, neither agreed or disagreed. This may be due to the community not being familiar with the SEND Partnership board or the Adult Learning Disability Partnership Board (their respective memberships and roles). This issue will need to be addressed quickly by the boards so that the SEND Community are confident that the organisations responsible for delivering the actions are properly held to account.

3.20 There are a variety of comments in reference to the governance arrangements. The lack of voluntary sector voice was noted and it is important to clarify that the voluntary sector is technically represented on the SEND Partnership Board by Amaze who currently hold the elected Community Works seat. There is no timescale for the actions, but each priority workstream will produce a detailed action plan, listing milestones, measures of success and key leads for more detailed proposals. However, it is anticipated that all actions in the document will be completed by the end of the calendar year 2026.

- 3.21 The funding implications of achieving such an ambitious strategy was also mentioned. These concerns have been captured and reflected upon in a stand-alone item in the main body of the new SEND strategy in addition to a narrative around how risks to strategy implementation will be monitored and mitigated. This also highlights that there is much within the strategy that isn't dependent upon additional funding; rather, there needs to be a change to the way services are designed/delivered and how agencies collaborate to make more efficient and effective use of existing resources.

ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.22 Stakeholders agree that the city needs a new SEND Strategy. It is best practice for a local area to have one in order to agree local priorities, commissioning arrangements and to enable success and progress in SEND services to be measured.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 4.1 A key principle of the development of the new strategy is to ensure that the voice of children, young people and adults with SEND is heard and incorporated. The draft SEND strategy was developed through a co-production process. It involved a large number of discussions and focus groups with a range of stakeholders and interested parties. This includes parents, carers, children and young people, adult service users, parent support groups, statutory service providers, the education sector, the independent sector and community and voluntary sector colleagues.
- 4.2 The recent consultation has provided significant additional feedback with many comments and views being added to the final SEND strategy document. Some Priority actions have also been amended to reflect more accurately the views of stakeholders (Appendix 1).
- 4.3 We have also incorporated the learning from a wide range of other steps taken in the city to capture feedback. This includes the biannual Safe and Well at School Survey which provides valuable feedback from pupils who are in receipt of support in school. We are also able to learn from the surveys and other activities undertaken by our parent/carer support groups in the city such as Amaze surveys and PaCC workshops. Focussed pieces of work have also taken place with the BAME community to ensure that their voice is heard and reflected throughout the document.

5. CONCLUSION

The SEND Strategy 2021-2026 has been a truly co-produced piece of work which reflects the aspirations of the SEND Community and those services, provisions and organisations that support it. The delivery of such an ambitious strategy will present challenges, particularly in light of the Covid pandemic; however, there is a determination across the city to overcome any barriers so that we can work together to meet the objectives. Our aim is to ensure that Brighton and Hove is one of the very best places to live if you have a special educational need or disability.

6. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 6.1 Future strategies and priorities will need to be considered in conjunction with available budget. In terms of council finance, the scope of services included crosses both Council General Fund and Dedicated Schools Grant budgets. As part of the Dedicated Schools Grant settlement for 2021/22 the Government has announced an additional sum of £730m nationally for high needs. For Brighton and Hove, this equates to an increase in the High Needs Block (HNB) allocation of c. £2.9m. This additional resource will give the LA some capacity to develop strategies in line with agreed priority areas. However, there are existing significant and growing pressures that also need to be addressed within this funding settlement.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steve Williams

Date: 15/10/2020

Legal Implications:

- 6.2 In September 2014, the introduction of the Children and Families Act brought about major reforms to the way local authorities and other organisations support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years is the related statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people. This places a duty on the local authority to consult children with SEND and their parents or carers when reviewing local SEN and social care provision.
- 6.3 The public consultation exercise outlined in this report will meet the common law duties in respect of procedural fairness, as well as duties set out in the statutory guidance that children, young people, their parents and carers must be consulted in determining the council's strategy for SEND.

Lawyer Consulted: Sandra O'Brien

Date: 16/10/2020

Equalities Implications:

- 6.4 The ability of residents with disabilities to access services and make progress has been a key consideration in the development of this new strategy. Improving outcomes for all in the city with SEND is a key priority for all partners and will be monitored as part of this work.
- 6.5 Many protected characteristics feature heavily in the strategy, we have worked closely with our partners and parent groups to ensure that we reflect the diversity in the city.
- 6.6 One of the strategic actions in the 'Sufficiency of SEND Services and Provision' priority is to carry out a city-wide SEND sufficiency project. This will involve further developing datasets and reporting we currently have around SEND Services.

- 6.7 We will monitor Equalities Impact as the strategy is implemented and reviewed on a regular basis by the SEND Partnership Board. Any actions identified from this process will be incorporated into the SEND Strategy priority action plans, where appropriate. This will ensure that those actions will be part of the regular monitoring of progress and scrutiny of data.

Sustainability Implications:

- 6.8 An agreed SEND Strategy within the city allows for more informed commissioning in this area, supporting best value for public resources.

Public Health Implications:

- 6.9 Early discussions on the new SEND Strategy development have taken place to ensure it is aligned with the city's existing Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Final SEND Strategy 2021 – 2026
2. Survey feedback

