

To: Executive
Wednesday 1 June 2022

**SEND Written Statement of Action (WSOA)
Executive Director of People**

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Executive on the progress and activity undertaken to develop a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) to address areas of weakness identified within Bracknell Forest following a local area joint inspection undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The WSOA must be submitted by 7 June 2022.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 The Executive are asked to note the current draft of the WSOA. The WSOA focusses on the 9 areas of significant weakness on which the partnership will be monitored.
- 2.2 The Executive are asked to endorse the content of the WSOA for submission, subject to final minor amendments that may be agreed by the council's Executive Director People and Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning.

3 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 One of the areas of significant weakness identified in the local area inspection was the lack of co-production with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) families and professionals. In response to this, the WSOA is being coproduced with a broad range of stakeholders, including children and young people. Whilst this approach takes considerably longer, it is helping us to produce an action plan that addresses concerns of all key stakeholders, includes actions from all partners and is jointly owned by the partnership.

The Executive are therefore asked to comment on this current draft of the document, whilst considering that the document is changing regularly, and final amendments are still being made, as outlined below:

- Minor changes to some actions in response to stakeholder feedback still to be incorporated
- Final review and feedback from CAMHS to be incorporated into improvement area 6
- Some additional information is required in the Glossary
- In the data section, all charts will be updated so the presentation is consistent in colour and format
- SEN2 data chart (number of EHCPs) will be updated to include 2021 and 2022 data – which shows continued growth in numbers
- Data to reflect improved performance on completion of EHCPs within 20 weeks will be added in, along with a narrative section
- Some of the delivery timelines will be updated or reordered once work on the resourcing plan is complete

4 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 None

5 Supporting Information

5.1 Between 29 November 2021 and 3 December 2021, Ofsted, and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Bracknell Forest to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. On 22 February 2022 they issued their findings that the Local Area, (the Local Authority and the relevant CCG) needed to produce a WSOA.

5.2 The Ofsted report identified some areas of strength, as well as areas for improvement. WSOA sets out our plan to address the 9 significant areas of weakness and other improvements identified by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The local area is required to submit the written statement of action by the 7 June 2022.

5.3 The WSOA will address the 9 areas of weakness raised by the inspection, namely:

- 1) the lack of a clear, co-produced strategy for how the much-needed improvements and change will be brought about
- 2) parents' and carers' lack of confidence in the education, healthcare and social opportunities for children and young people with SEND, alongside their frustration at the poor communication they experience with the SEND team
- 3) the lack of co-production with children and young people with SEND and their families, and with professionals. This includes the limited parental representation at a strategic level
- 4) the lack of appropriate educational provision for a significant proportion of children and young people with SEND in the borough
- 5) the lack of support available to children and young people while waiting excessive amounts of time to access occupational therapy services. Also, the lack of capacity in the occupational therapy team, resulting in delays to their contributions to EHC plans
- 6) the high number of children and young people with SEND who reach a mental health crisis because of a lack of timely support to prevent further escalation
- 7) the lack of established, effective panel arrangements to decide next steps in the Graduated Approach used for pupils who receive SEND support
- 8) insufficient long-term planning for young people as they move into adulthood
- 9) parents' and carers' lack of awareness of available advice, support, or social care provision. The lack of age-appropriate social opportunities for older children and young people with SEND.

5.4 Other areas for further improvement and development identified within the joint inspection report are incorporated in the WSOA but will not be formally monitored by the Department for Education (DfE) and CQC.

5.5 A draft resourcing plan has been developed to support the delivery of the WSOA action plan.

5.6 Development of the SEND Written Statement of Action

5.7 All areas for improvement identified by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have been placed into 5 workstreams. These 5 workstreams address the 9 significant weaknesses detailed above as a priority in the Ofsted and Care Quality Commissions inspection:

- Workstream A – Governance: Effective leadership, governance, and accountability of SEND
- Workstream B – Resources: Effective use of resources, including High Needs Block
- Workstream C – Provision and Support: implementing early support and intervention
- Workstream D – Co-production: Strengthen and Improve co-production with children and young people and their parents and carers
- Workstream E – Transition: Children and young people to have successful transition at all phases

5.11 Stakeholders

5.12 It has been important to ensure that each workstream has representation from key stakeholders. Membership of the workstreams now includes representatives from Bracknell Forest Council, the Clinical Commissioning group (CCG), schools, further education (FE), Bracknell Parent Carer Forum and Voluntary Community Services (VCS) organisations. All stakeholders have been instrumental in developing this document and the process of co-production has been adopted and implemented to ensure that the voices of all are captured.

5.13 With regards to sign off, a schedule of meetings and communications has been developed to ensure that the wider community of stakeholders can input into and endorse the document, thereby agreeing to support its implementation. Formal sign off processes within the council and the CCG are underway.

5.14 A final meeting of all workstream group members was held on Thursday 19 May to address any outstanding queries, issues, or concerns in response to the feedback received from all stakeholders.

5.15 A workshop was held at The Rise at Garth Hill College on Friday 20 May to capture the voice of children and young people. Their feedback has been incorporated into the WSOA, with several actions either already included, or amended, to take account of the feedback received.

5.16 Governance

5.17 Once the document is signed off by Ofsted and the CQC the identified workstream projects will continue to be delivered as outlined in the WSOA action plan. The SEND Improvement Partnership Board (SIPB) will monitor and scrutinise the workstreams,

this will also feed into the Children and Young People Partnership Board (CYPP) and other strategic boards within Bracknell Forest.

- 5.18 The WSOA output will also be monitored by the DfE and CQC to ensure the action plan is being delivered and is on track to achieve its aims and timelines.
- 5.19 The WSOA is now entering its final round of governance, with the documents being considered by the council's Executive on 1 June 2022.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 The financial implications will be considered when resourcing requirements are identified and at the point that delivery projects are identified.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 Consultation with stakeholders is ongoing and feedback is being regularly incorporated into the WSOA.

The principle of co-production underpins the development of the WSOA and detailed action plan. In addition, the governance structure is multi-agency with comprehensive representation from the local area.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 The implications for equalities will be considered at the point that delivery projects are identified.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 There will be a significant reputational risk to the council if we don't deliver against the 9 areas of significant weakness.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.6 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO₂.

The implications for climate change will be considered at the point that delivery projects are identified.

Health and Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 To be developed through the action plan.

Background Papers

WSOA DRAFT v3

Contact for further information

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