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| Committee | Date |
| Community and Children's Services Education Board | 13 February 2015 5 March 2015 |
| Subject: Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Strategy – Progress Update | Public |
| Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services | For Information |

Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the progress made in implementing Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 in regards to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). Members have previously received reports on the City's SEND Policy and Strategy, in:

- January 2013 – approving consultation on a new policy and strategy
- July 2013 – approving the City's SEND Policy and Strategy 2013–17 (following the outcomes of the consultation), pending further development of an Action Plan with partners and stakeholders (Appendix 1)
- March 2014 – approving the City's SEND Action Plan (Appendix 2), when Members also agreed to receive regular updates to monitor progress in implementing the Action Plan.

The attached SEND Action Plan update (Appendix 2) shows a detailed summary of the progress made to date for each of the actions listed against the six priorities. Although the Action Plan updates show significant progress in the majority of actions in all six priorities, as in all other local authorities there is still a considerable amount of work to be undertaken to meet the requirements of the SEND reforms in the Act, which came into force in September 2014. Over the coming months, efforts will be concentrated on the areas where sufficient progress has not been made, namely to ensure that:

- a comprehensive Local Offer of services available for children and families with SEND is available on the FYI Directory
- effective commissioning arrangements are in place for the delivery of joint services, particularly with Health, and for the transfer from children's to adult services
- children, young people and parents are consulted on the services and the information available, and these services are promoted
- a personal budget policy and process is finalised and published.

Recommendation

That Members note the progress made with partners and stakeholders in implementing the six priorities of the SEND Strategy Action Plan 2013–17.

Main Report

Background

1. The City has a statutory duty to keep its arrangements for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision under review. In addition, there are significant national reforms to SEND duties and responsibilities outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014,¹ which came into force from September 2014 onwards. In preparing the City to be in a position to implement these duties, Members have previously received reports on the City's SEND Policy and Strategy, in:
 - January 2013, when the Committee approved consultation on a new SEND Policy and Strategy
 - July 2013, approving the City's SEND Policy and Strategy 2013–17 (following the outcomes of the consultation), pending further development of an Action Plan with partners and stakeholders (Appendix 1)
 - March 2014, approving the City's SEND Action Plan (Appendix 2), when Members also agreed to receive regular updates to monitor progress in implementing the Action Plan.

Current Position

2. Attached to this report is the SEND Action Plan (Appendix 2), which provides a detailed summary of progress on each of the actions listed against the six priorities. These changes are being implemented using a programme management approach, with each of the developments being progressed by a multi-disciplinary workstream team comprising representatives from health agencies, social care (children's and adults) and education. Progress towards implementing the legal requirements of the SEND reforms by the required dates is reported to the Children's Executive Board. An overview of progress against each of the six priorities is provided, as follows:
 - **Early identification and intervention** – *linking into the 'early help offer' outlined in the Early Intervention and Prevention Framework* – Significant progress has been made against five of the seven actions listed. The remaining two actions are scheduled for further work from spring 2015 onwards.
 - **Family confidence** – *linking into stronger safeguarding and user engagement* – Significant progress has been made in four of the eight actions listed. The remaining four actions are scheduled for work from spring 2015 onwards.
 - **Learning and life outcomes** – *linking into achievement and learning* – Work has recently started on four of the actions listed, with work scheduled to start on the remaining four from spring 2015 onwards.

¹ Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

- **Transition** – *linking into partnerships and user engagement* – Significant progress has been made in all three actions listed in this priority.
 - **Multi-agency working** – *linking into partnerships* – Significant progress has been made in all five actions listed in this priority.
 - **Implementing national reforms** – *linking into children’s workforce development* – Significant progress has been made in all five actions listed in this priority.
3. As part of the SEND reforms being delivered through the Action Plan and specifically through the sixth priority, ‘Implementing national reforms’, the following changes are required to be introduced:
- Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, the proposed replacement to the current Statement of SEN
 - a Local Offer of services for disabled children and young people and those with SEN
 - new protections for young people aged 16–25 in further education and a stronger focus on preparing them for adulthood
 - arrangements to meet the new entitlement for all children and young people with a new EHC Plan to request a personal budget, extending their choice and control over their support
 - effective joint commissioning arrangements for education, health (Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health) and social care for children’s services.
4. In terms of progress in these areas, the City’s EHC Plan has been finalised in consultation with parents, and has been signed off by the Department for Education as being compliant with the Code of Practice. Two EHC Plans have been issued. A final piece of work is being undertaken to work out how the Health element of any funding/commissioning requirements will be ‘signed off’ by Health when new EHC Plans are agreed.
5. In terms of the Local Offer, the City is compliant, with the infrastructure being in place and ‘live’ from 1 September. However, despite concerted efforts to obtain information from all organisations on what facilities/services are available to meet the needs of children and young people with additional needs, responses have been limited. Continued efforts are being made to outline a comprehensive Local Offer of services available for children and families with SEND on the Local Offer web pages, within FYI Directory. An officer is now visiting providers to encourage them to respond.
6. Work is continuing to progress on ensuring that a policy and process are in place for personal budgets, particularly with regards to the inclusion of any Health elements. It is anticipated that requests for these will be low, if indeed

there are any at all, so arrangements for this will need to be set up within existing processes to ensure economies of scale.

7. As we take this work forward the Department will continue the consultation processes we have in place to ensure that the needs of children and their families are being met.

Proposals

8. It is proposed that Members note the progress in implementing the SEND Strategy through the Action Plan and the specific arrangements for implementing the SEND reforms.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

9. The continued implementation and development of the SEND Policy and Strategy will contribute to the wider Education Policy for the City of London Corporation that was approved by Committee in November 2013.

Legal and Financial Implications

10. It is a statutory requirement for the City to keep under review its arrangements for SEND, and this process will ensure the City continues to provide modern, efficient and high-quality services to meet the needs of children and young people. These services are undertaking significant change through the implementation of the SEND Strategy and reforms.
11. The financial implications in carrying out this work are covered within the allocated local risk budgets.

Conclusion

12. Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 requires an agenda for national reform of SEND over the next few years, the implications of which the City needs to address. This report confirms the ongoing arrangements for monitoring the approved SEND Action Plan (Appendix 2) for developing SEND services and implementing the SEND reforms within the City.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: City of London SEND Policy and Strategy 2013–17
- Appendix 2: City of London SEND Action Plan 2013–17, with progress monitoring information

Background Papers:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Strategy Committee Report, Community and Children's Services Committee, 14 March 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Strategy Committee Report, Community and Children's Services Committee, 12 July 2013
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Strategy Committee Report, Community and Children's Services Committee, 10 January 2013

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