

**From:** Rory Love, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills  
Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

**To:** Scrutiny SEND Sub-Committee – 28 September 2023

**Subject:** Accelerated Progress Plan

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of report:** None

**Future Pathway of report:** None

**Summary:**

This report outlines the development and content of the Accelerated Progress Plan which was created in response to the Improvement Notice for SEN services.

**Recommendation(s):**

The SEND Sub-Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Ofsted and the CQC conducted a re-visit to Kent in September 2022 to assess whether the local area (KCC, NHS Kent and Medway, and local schools and settings) had made progress in addressing the areas of significant weakness identified in their inspection of the local area in 2019. Their findings were published in November 2022, which found that KCC had not made sufficient progress.
- 1.2 In March 2023, KCC received a letter from the Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing, informing KCC of her decision to issue an Improvement Notice. The letter set out a requirement for KCC and NHS Kent and Medway to develop a rapid improvement plan, called an Accelerated Progress Plan (APP), which was required within 6 weeks of the issuance of this letter. The APP was delivered to the DfE by the required deadline and further representations were undertaken until the DfE's final agreement in late August.

## **2. Accelerated Progress Plan**

- 2.1 The agreed APP can be found on KCC's website, alongside a summary of how each requirement will be addressed (Appendix A)
- 2.2 The APP is focussed on the nine areas of weakness identified in the 2019 inspection, which are:

- A widely held concern of parents that the local area is not able, or in some cases not willing, to meet their children's needs
- A variable quality of provision and commitment to inclusion in schools, and the lack of willingness of some schools to accommodate children and young people with SEND.
- That parents and carers have a limited role in reviewing and designing services for children and young people with SEND.
- An inability of current joint commissioning arrangements to address known gaps and eliminate longstanding weaknesses in the services for children and young people with SEND.
- Poor standards achieved, and progress made, by too many children and young people with SEND.
- The inconsistent quality of the EHC process; a lack of up-to-date assessments and limited contributions from health and care professionals; and poor processes to check and review the quality of EHC plans.
- Weak governance of SEND arrangements across the EHC system at strategic and operational level and an absence of robust action plans to address known weaknesses.
- Unacceptable waiting times for children and young people to be seen by some health services, particularly CAMHS, tier two services, SALT, the wheelchair service, and ASD and ADHD assessment and review.
- A lack of effective systems to review and improve outcomes for those children and young people whose progress to date has been limited by weaknesses in provision.

### **3. Review and monitoring**

3.1 The APP details how the Kent-wide SEN System (comprising Health, Education, and the County Council) is intending to respond to each area of weakness and how evidence of progress will be collected and monitored.

3.2 Oversight of progress to the APP will be monitored by The Partnership Delivery Group (PDG), who will provide monthly reporting to the Strategic Improvement and Assurance Board.

3.3 KCC submitted its first formal response to the Department for Education in July 2023. Future reports are expected to be delivered in late September and November 2023.

### **4. Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation(s):**

The SEND Sub-Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

### **5. Background Documents**

Appendix A – Accelerated Progress Plan and Summary ([Kent improvement plan for special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) - Kent County Council](#))

## **6.Contact details**

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