

Briefing Paper to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**Wards: All**16th February 2026

Hull's SEND Improvement Plan

Briefing Paper of the of Corporate Director for CYPFS**1. Purpose of the Paper and Summary**

- 1.1 The scope of Hull's SEND Improvement Plan (SIP) is broad, encompassing activity across the Health, Education and Social Care partnership and the impact of dozens of services on children's lives. The purpose of this paper is therefore to outline the governance and accountability arrangements and the high level of assurance these provide, rather than to describe the impact of SEND improvement work in any detail. However, Appendix 1 does provide an overview of the SIP's progress and the document itself can be referenced as Appendix 2.
- 1.2 The paper also provides an update on the imminent SEND Reform white paper and the DfE's 'Planning for Change' documentation. It is already clear that our SIP will need to be updated and possibly restructured in light of this guidance, which anticipates the most momentous educational reforms of a generation. Partners remain committed to the 'one plan' approach because it has been key to establishing and sustaining a sense of strategic direction, partnership wide. However, in six months time, once partners have considered the detail of the white paper, the 'one plan' that is Hull's SIP will look different.

2. Background

- 2.1 Ofsted undertook an inspection of our SEND system in November 2023. The outcome of this was a grading of '2', meaning that the impact of the system on children's experiences and their outcomes was 'inconsistent'. Five areas for improvement (AFIs) were identified, and the legacy SIP was amended to ensure there was a focus on these. It is possible to filter the plan to identify AFI specific improvement activity but it's important to note that the SIP is ambitious in scope and goes well beyond AFIs.

2.2 It is structured around six strategic priorities which were coproduced with the Parent Carer Forum following the SEND reinspection of 2017 (when an Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) was issued.)

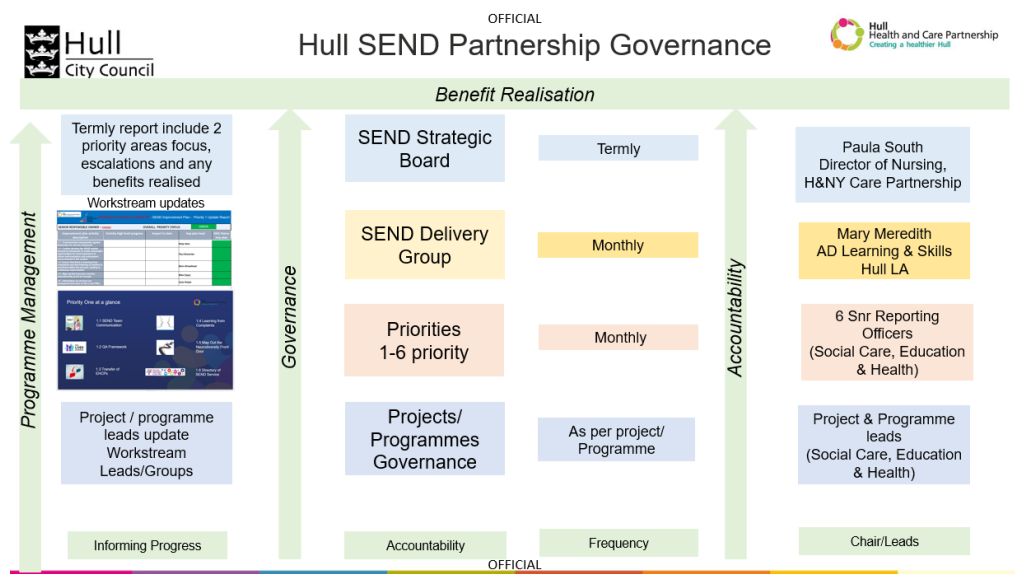
2.3 In full, these are:

1. To work towards clear & open lines of communication that support a collaborative and partnership approach to the delivery of services that offer greater choice & control.
2. To have improved links & partnership working where we develop & plan services together.
3. To identify need early so that the right support can be put in place at the right time.
4. To have improved, measurable quality assurance arrangements that hold all partners to account in relation to their duties under the Children & Families Act, SEND Regulations & SEND Code of Practice.
5. To deliver sustainable services that are value for money & ensure as can continue to deliver good quality services that make a difference to our CYPF.
6. To have improved transition experiences for our CYP which support & enable them to reach their potential.

2.4 Progress towards each priority is driven through a range of actions, projects and workstreams which are captured within the SIP. Their timeliness and impact is monitored through the governance arrangements described in the visual below. Central to delivery are Senior Reporting Officers (SROs) who are each responsible for a strategic priority and the projects and workstreams that sit beneath it. Priority highlight reports and any closure reports are presented SEND Strategic Board through a rolling programme.

Closure Reports

2.5 An overarching 'benefits realisation' planning process is critical to accountability. This identifies the timeline, tools and resources necessary to ensure that the benefits of improvement activity are realised over time. Closure reports are presented to the SEND Strategic Board for sign-off, alongside the Priority Highlight Report, to demonstrate that the activity has achieved its intended impact and is embedded. The SEND Strategic Board ensures that the evidence presented is robust before agreeing that the action can be closed and its impact logged within the 'Benefits Realisation Plan.' This process helps to ensure that all stakeholders understand the impact of actions on children's outcomes and experiences.



2.6 Additionally, a risk management approach ensures that risks that could impact the delivery of strategic priority programmes are identified and understood across the partnership. There are escalation protocols for significant risks and ownership is assigned to ensure accountability. A risk register is regularly reviewed at SEND Delivery and reported to the SEND Board.

3. Issues for Consideration

3.1 Every six months and consistent with all LAs judged to have been inconsistent by Ofsted, the DfE’s Regional Director for SEND reviews the progress of Hull’s SIP through a ‘senior officials meeting’. The most recent feedback letter is attached as Appendix 3, headlines including:

- ✓ significant progress has been made against each priority – with 88% on track (with no concerns), embedded or completed. Of that 88%, 48% of actions are reported to be embedded and sustained.
- ✓ the stability of the statutory team has improved significantly, with no dependence on agency staff for over a year
- ✓ Work has also taken place to strengthen health integration in quality assurance
- ✓ Significant work has been undertaken to transform (SEND training) into a multi-layered, multidisciplinary strategy with lived experience at the centre.
- ✓ A review of the SEND outreach service has also taken place. This has led to an expansion of the service including the introduction of a new Communication and Language service and a Secondary SEMH service.
- ✓ Following feedback from parents and carers that meeting sensory needs was a significant gap across all age groups, a commissioned sensory service has also been introduced.

- ✓ All Trusts in the Local Area have signed up to a 70/30 cost sharing model for the Outreach Service. This is a significant achievement and demonstrates the strong working relationships, and ambition across the sector to strive towards a more inclusive system.
- ✓ Waiting times for ASD, ADHD and SALT continue to present a challenge due to increasing demand. Partners reported wanting to ensure children, young people and families are given the tools and appropriate wraparound support whilst waiting for pharmaceutical interventions

(Anthony Mayor, Snr Officials Feedback letter, January 15th 2026)

3.2 It is clear that significant progress has been made since the 2023 SEND inspection, which itself represented a major step forward from the one before. In addition, having reviewed the DfE's 'planning for change guidance,' the changes that will shortly have to be made will not constitute a change of strategic direction so much as a filling of gaps. This is because there is a strong correlation between the priorities coproduced with Hull parents and carers and the government's seven pillars of reform:

Pillar 1: Co-production with parents and carers and Children and Young People

Pillar 2: Effective system leadership and governance

**Pillar 3: Accurate understanding of needs through effective use of data
(Understanding and evidencing the needs of children and young people with SEND and children and young people who may benefit from AP)**

Pillar 4: High Quality Service Delivery at universal, targeted and specialist level to promote inclusion

Pillar 5: Effective partnerships working across education, health and social care

Pillar 6: Skilled workforce across the partnership

Pillar 7: Targeted, judicious and sustainable use of resources including sufficiency, place planning and capital

4. Next steps

- 4.1 Bring the partnership together to complete the DfE's 'planning for change' maturity assessment
- 4.2 Coproduce an updated SIP which ensures that improvement activity is closely aligned with the seven pillars of reform
- 4.3 Submit the local plan (updated SIP) to the DfE

Corporate Director for CYPFS

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Officer Interests: None

Background Documents: -

Appendix 1 – Summary of SIP progress

Appendix 2 – Full SIP

Appendix 3 – Snr Officials Meeting Feedback Letter