



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
AND SAFEGUARDING)**

**MEETING HELD AT THE BALLROOM, TOWN HALL BOOTLE  
ON FRIDAY 30TH JUNE, 2017**

PRESENT: Councillor Murphy (in the Chair)  
Councillors Hands, Brenda O'Brien, Pitt and  
Spencer  
Mrs Sandra Cain and Mrs C. Palmer

**10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bennett, Bradshaw, Carragher, Keith (and her substitute Councillor Booth) and Webster (and her substitute Councillor Brennan), Education Added Member Father Des Seddon and Associate Member Mrs. Libby Kitt.

**11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were received.

**12. SEND INSPECTION - STATEMENT OF ACTION**

Further to Minute No. 6 (2) of the meeting held on 21 June 2017 the Committee considered the report of the Head of Schools and Families seeking approval of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Inspection re-drafted statement of action prior to its submission to Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Attached as annexes to the report were:-

- (1) the letter from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission on their joint evaluation of the Council's written statement of action submitted to them on 18 April 2017. The letter indicated that the statement of action was deemed not fit for purpose in setting out how the local area would tackle the significant areas of weakness identified in the published report letter; that the plan was not fit for purpose because the actions to deliver improvements across health commissioning and provision were not sufficiently specific, measurable, relevant or timely; and that Sefton was required to re-submit a statement of action to Ofsted and CQC within 20 working days; and
- (2) the amended statement of action taking into consideration the feedback from Ofsted which had been developed following discussions with NHS England, Department for Education, Health providers and the Parent Carer Forum.

The Special Meeting had been arranged to comply with the timetable set by Ofsted and CQC for the re-submission of the statement of action.

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Dwayne Johnson, Director of Social Care and Health introduced the report and indicated that a statement of action was required “to address the poor operational oversight of the DCO across health services in supporting children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families”, “to improve the lack of awareness and understanding of health professionals in terms of their responsibilities and contribution to EHCPs” and “to address the weakness of joint commissioning in ensuring that there are adequate services to meet local demand“ which Ofsted/CQC considered were not fit for purpose because the actions to deliver improvements across health commissioning and provision were not sufficiently specific, measurable, relevant or timely. The main areas where this contained weaknesses and steered by CQC/OFSTED related to Sections 2, 3 and 5.

Mr. Johnson concluded by reminding Members that the Council had to work to tight timescales as the re-drafted version of the statement of action had to be submitted to Ofsted on 6 July 2017; that comments made by Members would be included in the re-drafted statement; and that prior to its resubmission, the re-drafted version would be circulated to Members.

Debbie Fagan, South Sefton and Southport and Formby Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) indicated that the re-drafted statement of action presented to Members had increased in size to reflect the consultation feedback provided by NHS England, Department for Education, Parent’s Forum, provider colleagues and local authority health colleagues; and that re-formatting of headings within the statement would be undertaken to aid the flow of the document for the reader.

Members of the Committee commented on and asked questions on the following issues:-

### Section 2

- The establishment of the roles of Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) and Designated medical Officer (DMO)
- The Speech and Language Therapy Service and in particular, the discharge of pupils from the service to schools; and waiting times to access services
- Concern was expressed regarding the format of the re-drafted statement because it was suggested that it was difficult to cross-reference actions in the original and re-drafted statements. It was suggested that this may draw criticism from Ofsted/CQC Inspectors
- Action A2.1.7 relating to the production of an options appraisal for a future DCO / DMO model across Sefton and wider, if agreed, across the North Mersey LDS footprint; and why there had been a slippage in the timescale

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- What would happen if Ofsted/CQC rejected the re-drafted statement of action
- The concern that schools did not notify the Council when they accepted pupils with SEND needs
- The monitoring of progress made against actions contained in the statement
- The timeframe for the DCO to assess pupils with issues such as food allergies
- Action A2.1.5 relating to the establishment of a series of meetings with local health partners to review the current DCO model and to determine the future model; and in particular the timeframe for the completion of this exercise

### Section 3

Debbie Fagan updated Members on Action A3.1.1 (Promote the role and function of the DCO / DMO and develop a heightened awareness across the local system of the SEND reforms including EHCPs) regarding tightening up governance and accountability arrangements; Action A3.1.3 (Ensure the completed training needs analysis is reviewed to inform the commissioning of specific training to meet the needs of local health providers of services for children and young people with SEND) and the co-ordination and alignment of the plan for SEND children; and Action A3.1.5 (Agree and initiate a regular process for audit to inform the multi-agency assurance model for EHCPs) regarding quality assurance and the audit of plans.

- 0 -25 Community Health providers
- The differing levels of SEND support
- The role of the DCO and DMO in the hands-on delivery of care
- The assignment of names to job roles within the plan

### Section 5

Debbie Fagan updated Members on Action A5.1.7 (A new Neuro-developmental Pathway (which will include pathways for autism, ADHD and Asperger's) will be co-produced) and advised how this area had been strengthened and explained the process of the strategic needs assessment. Reference was also made to a "Big Chat" event to be held on 11 July 2017; and that the event, organised by the South Sefton Clinical Commissioning Group, would enable local residents to hear about some of the plans for local healthcare in the local area, have a say on the development of these services and how to get involved and share their experiences. This event was similar to one that had recently taken place in the north of the borough organised by the Southport and Formby Clinical Commissioning Group.

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- Regarding Action A5.1.7 concern was expressed over the timescales relating to the action; whether information could be included in a newsletter seeking volunteers; and that this action provided good, real engagement and that it should therefore be included in greater detail in the plan
- The inequality of service provision in connection with Action A5.1.9 (Ensure robust performance management of key health services for SEND are in place to support improved outcomes for Children & Young People) and Action A5.1.10 (Commissioners to address the inequity of service provision across north and south Sefton with regards to the Children's Complex Needs Team following the completion of the NHSI led transaction process)
- Assurance was sought that both South Sefton and Southport and Formby Clinical Commissioning Groups commissioned services to the same specifications
- Do officers consider that the re-drafted statement is robust and addresses the points raised by Ofsted/CQC in their letter of 9 June 2017; and how the covering letter to Ofsted/CQC would be written to identify that the three areas of concern had been addressed.

Mr. Johnson indicated that:-

- with regard to the format of the statement of action, Ofsted/CQC would look at the document afresh to ensure that the statement addressed the three bullet points referred to in their letter of 9 June 2017; and that he would contact Ofsted/CQC to clarify their position regarding the reappraisal of the statement of action
- in the event that the re-drafted statement of action was rejected by Ofsted/CQC further work would be undertaken on the identified areas of concern; and that it was possible, but conjecture that an external appointee could be assigned to support the Council to produce the statement of action although this scenario was considered unlikely.

RESOLVED: That:-

- (1) subject to the inclusion of comments made by Members, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Inspection re-drafted statement of action be approved for submission to Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission;
- (2) prior to the submission of the re-drafted statement the Director of Social Care and Health be requested to circulate a copy, together with the covering letter, to all Members of the Committee;
- (3) the Head of Schools and Families be requested to submit six

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monthly monitoring reports on progress made against the actions contained in the statement;

- (4) Members and officers be thanked for their attendance at the meeting at short notice; and
- (5) details of the "Big Chat" event to be held on 11 July 2017 be circulated to all Members of the Committee.