

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES		
SUBJECT:	SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS STRATEGY		
DATE OF DECISION:	16 JULY 2013		
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF EDUCATION		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Dr Julia Katherine	Tel: 023 8083 3470
	E-mail:	Julia.katherine@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Name:	Alison Elliott	Tel: 023 8080 2602
	E-mail:	Alison.elliott@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
None

BRIEF SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper is to ask Members to adopt a new Special Educational Needs (SEN) Strategy for 2013-2016. There are significant changes to the SEN system nationally as specific in the Children & families Bill 2013 which is currently going through parliament. The reforms are due to come into force in September 2014 so the new strategy will support the local authority to prepare for and meet the new statutory requirements.

The strategy sets out the vision for services, gives details of the national and local context and presents the fifteen strategic objectives to improve services and the support provided to children and young people.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To adopt the new SEN Strategy for 2013-2016 attached at Appendix 1.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. From September 2014 there will be new statutory requirements on local authorities around services and support for children and young people with Special educational Needs. The SEN Strategy will support the local authority to plan for meeting all of the requirements.
2. Local needs assessments and service reviews have identified a number of areas for service improvement, many of which overlap with the Government's SEN reforms. The strategy will bring together recommendations from these reviews and provide one single action plan to address them.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3. It is essential that Local Authorities have an SEN Strategy in place and that services plan for how they will implement the changes outlined in the Children & Families Bill 2013. Alternative options have therefore been considered and rejected as not having an SEN Strategy will make it more difficult to coordinate actions from such a wide range of staff and organisations.

Alternative strategic objectives were considered during the consultation period and have been included in the final strategy.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

4. Around 6,650 (23%) of school pupils in Southampton are identified as having Special Educational Needs, the majority can be supported with extra help within school. Around 670 children and young people (2.8% of all pupils) have a statement of SEN which sets out the support the local authority and schools will provide to support them, there is an absolute duty to provide the support set out in the statement.
5. The government's SEND reforms are focussed on support for those aged 0 up to 25 years of age, particularly around:
 - Developing integrated assessments that result in Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs)
 - Trialling the use of Personal Budgets within education, health and social care settings
 - Development of a Local Offer
6. Since September 2011, Southampton City Council and the partner health authority have been trialling these reforms as one of 20 pathfinder areas across the country. There have been significant successes within the pathfinder and Southampton has led the way nationally on many aspects of the work particularly around the development of integrated assessments and co-ordinated Education, Health & Care Plans. The SEN strategy builds upon these successes and supports the local authority to prepare for the new statutory requirements from September 2014 by continuing with the current work and expanding it across the city.
7. Consultation took place on the strategic objectives to be included in the SEN Strategy from December 2012 to February 2013. A consultation document was sent to a wide range of stakeholders including:
 - Managers in Southampton City Council – Children's Services
 - Stakeholders involved in the SEND Pathfinder project
 - Voluntary organisations who work with children and young people
 - Chairs of the primary, secondary and special school head teacher forums
 - Governors of all schools in Southampton
 - Health professionals and managers
8. There were a total of 19 responses to the consultation. These were used to inform the final set of objectives within the strategy.
9. The key themes arising from the consultation were a broad agreement with the proposed strategic objectives, with particular emphasis around the importance of early identification and assessment of SEN, improving transitions between school and college and also strengthening multi-agency working to ensure support is provided holistically. Further consultation feedback is presented within an appendix to the SEN Strategy.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

10. Changes to SEN assessment processes and interventions will be managed within existing resources.
11. Establishment of a secondary Additionally Resourced Provision for Autism within a mainstream school will be financed from the High Needs Budget funded by Dedicated Schools Grant.

Property/Other

12. There are no property implications.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

13. The Council has a variety of statutory powers and duties in relation to the identification and delivery of educational support for Special Educational Needs and Disability in maintained schools contained within the Education Act 1996, as amended, and the Learning & Skills Act 2000. The new statutory requirements come from the Children & Families Bill 2013 which is expected to come into force in September 2014 subject to receiving Royal Assent.

Other Legal Implications:

14. The proposals in the strategy have been formulated having regard to the Council's statutory duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998. Further legal implications in this regard are referenced in the strategy itself.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

15. This proposal is in accordance with the Children and Young People's Plan.
16. This proposal is in accordance with the draft Joint Commissioning Strategy for Disabled Children and Young People currently being developed by Southampton City Council and Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
-----------------------------	-----

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	SEN Strategy 2013-2016
2.	SEN Strategy Action Plan

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
----	------

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	YES
--	-----

Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	Equality Impact Assessment	
----	----------------------------	--