

Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officer:	Diane Booth, Director of Children’s Services
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Kath Benson, Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration
Date of Meeting:	16 September 2019

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES SERVICE STRATEGY

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the proposed strategy for the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Service.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To agree the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Service Strategy 2019/2021, as attached at Appendix 3a, including its vision and strategic objectives, with effect until 30 September 2021.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Local Area is required to publish a strategy detailing how the needs of young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities will be met. This new strategy will replace the current strategy that ended in December 2018. The strategy has been out for public consultation between November 2018 and January 2019. The draft strategy has been developed in conjunction with the Parents and the Young Peoples Voice Forum.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council’s approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

The alternative option is to have no strategy, this would not be practical or advised.

This strategy attached at Appendix 3a could have different priorities and recommendations.

This would mean the strategy could not be approved at this meeting and officers would need to do further consultation work.

4.0 Council priority:

- 4.1 The relevant Council priority is: “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”.

5.0 Background information

- 5.1 Since the introduction of the Children and Families Act in 2014, partners in the Local Area are required to publish a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Services Strategy. The strategy must be consulted on with wider partners and stakeholders. It must include arrangements on how the Local Area plan to meet the needs of young people aged 0-25, and how they will have their needs identified and support offered if they have a Special Educational Need. To meet this requirement the attached strategy at Appendix 3a along with a Young People Friendly version produced by the Young Peoples Forum attached at Appendix 3c.
- 5.2 The strategy aims to meet the requirements of the Children and Families Act in a way that is ambitious, inclusive and realistic in a challenging financial context and therefore forms the Council’s policy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The strategy is centred around a vision for all children and young people, particularly those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or are looked after to have the right support and opportunities at the right time so that they become resilient, happy and successful in their adulthood. The Council wants to be aspirational and ambitious for all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, especially where that child may be looked after. The strategy aims to achieve these ambitions for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities by continuing to focus on taking actions to reduce inequalities and closing the gap between those who already do well and those who may need extra support to thrive. This is underpinned by a belief that every Blackpool child and young person should be supported in the community where they live.
- 5.3 The strategy will achieve its vision through access to good high quality local early years provision, schools and further education settings. In addition to the right learning opportunities, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities should be offered access to appropriate health and care support in response to their assessed needs. The vision is then underpinned by a number of strategic principals and identifies key enablers around processes, infrastructure and resources, people and joint leadership to take the strategy forward. The strategy also outlines four strategic objectives and a dashboard of targets to measure success.

5.4 The strategy has also been shaped by the views of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee which has been consulted at its meeting on 20 June 2019 and the consultation responses outlined at Appendix 3b.

5.5 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.6 List of Appendices:

Appendix 3a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Services Strategy 2019/2021
Appendix 3b- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Services Consultation response
Appendix 3c- Young People Friendly version

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 The Children and Families Act requires the Local Authority to publish a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Services Strategy.

7.0 Human resources considerations:

7.1 There are potential resource implications for the Council, as most of the functions are statutory and the Local Authority should have staff in place to perform the roles identified in the strategy.

7.2 However, there will also need to be a review of current commitments by the local authority in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Service, as there has been a significant increase in the number of children needing Special Educational Needs support and statutory services. The increase has been equivalent to 60% in the last 4 years.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 This strategy covers the protected characteristic of Disability and how the local area provide support for the age range 0-25.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None recurring as the new Burdens Grant was provided by the government to the Council. The increased demand had placed an additional £90,000 pressure on the budget. The local increased demand pressures are in line with national issues and the Department for Education are aware of the pressures Councils face.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The risk of not having a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities strategy will significantly impact the Council in the Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inspection from The Office for Standards in Education.

10.2 There is a significant risk to the Council if it does not plan and have a strategy to meet the needs of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities young people in the future as it will be unable to respond and plan for future demand.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 This strategy supports the Council Plan and its core purpose and functions.

12.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

12.1 A public consultation took place from November 2018 until January 2019. The views expressed helped shape the policy.

12.2 Officers have also consulted with 'Victoria's Voice' the joint Council and hospital young people's forum and they have created a young people's friendly version. This strategy has been reviewed by the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 June 2019.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None

14.0 Key decision information:

14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 15/2019

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

15.0 Call-in information:

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed: 6 September 2019 Date approved:

17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

17.1

18.0 Executive decision:

18.1

19.0 Date of Decision:

19.1

20.0 Reason(s) for decision:

20.1

21.0 Date Decision published:

21.1

22.0 Executive Members in attendance:

22.1

23.0 Call-in:

23.1

24.0 Notes:

24.1