

**Committee and Date**

Item

Public



# SEND and AP Strategy 2025 – 2029 and Outcomes Framework

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	David Shaw		
email:	David.shaw@shropshire.gov.uk	Tel:	01743 256479
<b>Cabinet Member</b> (Portfolio Holder):	Andy Hall		

## 1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The SEND and AP Strategy and the Outcomes Framework, is designed to support children, young people and their families to achieve their best life. It seeks to provide a coherent and consistent direction for practitioners, providers and partners who support children, young people and families. This paper will explain how this will be achieved and seeks the endorsement of Cabinet for this approach.

## 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Shropshire Plan 2022-25 is a strategic plan that sets out how we are working towards a healthy and sustainable Shropshire. Participation across services is at the heart of the agenda and key to its success. It involves communities, businesses, health partners and the public sector all working together to address challenges, propose solutions and make informed choices that drive positive change for the benefit of all.
- 2.2 The SEND and AP (Alternative Provision) Strategy is aimed at supporting the SEND and AP Area Partnership, who are the strategic leaders in Shropshire with

responsibility for SEND and AP through [the SEND and AP Partnership Board](#), to improve and streamline all services for children and young people (0-25) with special educational needs and or disability, including looked after children and young people and care leavers with SEND to age 25. This is an overarching strategy that involves a number of partners working together, from Education, Health and Care services, as well as a range of commissioned providers. This strategy builds upon the previous strategy, national and local developments, plus direct feedback from children, young people, families and professionals.

- 2.3 The outcomes framework aims to take a single, unified approach to improving outcomes for children and young people, including tracking impact across all the services that are part of the SEND and AP Area Partnership. This will ensure that we are aware of the impact of these services on children, young people and their families and care givers.
- 2.4 The strategy and outcomes framework are aimed at improving services and to ensure that services work together effectively to deliver better outcomes. The documents will be underpinned by a clear system wide action plan covering each of the priority areas led by a multi-agency workstream. The action planning approach employed for the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) provides a clear example of this and is available here [Local area SEND inspection | Shropshire Council](#)
- 2.5 The strategy and outcomes framework has been developed with, and is fully endorsed by, the Shropshire Parent and Carer Council (PACC) our parent carer forum, SEND Independent Advice Support Service (SENDIASS), alongside children, young people and families with lived experience, early years settings, schools, colleges, frontline practitioners, elected members, the voluntary and community sector, and the NHS Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Integrated Care System. These partners are represented on the [SEND and AP Partnership Board](#) and/or have statutory duties to deliver services for children and young people with SEND, including those accessing AP.
- 2.6 The feedback from engagement activities during the development phases and the public consultation was supportive of the Strategy and the overarching outcomes identified in the Outcomes Framework. Once approved, the implementation and delivery plans will be established in conjunction with multi-agency workstreams as outlined in 2.4.
- 2.7 Several respondents felt more information was needed about how the outcomes would be monitored. From this, it was recognised that more work was needed to provide a robust and measurable framework for SEND. This includes clear steps to achieve the outcomes statements, measures that are specific, measurable, and relevant to track progress and reference data sources as per the SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This has been developed and included within the outcomes framework.
- 2.8 Some respondents noted the need to not confuse outcomes for the child and young person with those of the parent carer. This has resulted in changes being made to reflect this.

- 2.9 There is also a commitment to establishing a programme of engagement that delivers the council's co-production strategy and working collaboratively with the partnership. This will encourage and enable everyone to have a voice in feedback and development work.
- 2.10 Several respondents identified that some outcome measures would not lead to measurable outcomes being easily identified (e.g. "I have opportunities to experience joy as a family"). In collaboration with the parent carer council, work has taken place to improve the clarity of this work.
- 2.11 The full Outcomes Framework (appendix 2) has been refined significantly following the feedback from the public consultation with input from PACC, as outlined in 2.7-2.10. This has included streamlining the high levels outcomes from 7 to 6 and refining the wording across each area to reflect questions relating to the expectation on parent carers. Mechanisms to gather the views of parent carers and children and young people at the point of annual review have been developed as part of the outcomes framework. This will enable the SEND and AP Partnership to receive on a termly basis information from key performance indicators. This will significantly strengthen the voice of parent carers and young people in supporting strategic change with respect to SEND and AP.
- 2.12 Following feedback from parent carers, the partnership recognised the need for the Outcomes Framework to be focused on the outcomes for children, young people and their families. Performance indicators for SEND and AP partners would be developed as part of the area SEND and AP implementation plan.
- 2.12 Following the wide range of engagement activity, including with DfE, NHS England and public consultation, the Area SEND and AP Partnership believe it is important to ratify the work completed to date recognising that the Outcomes Framework should always be a 'live working document' as we continually refine our understanding and raise our expectations on 'what good looks like' for children and young people with SEND and those accessing AP, families and partners. As a result, some of the specific measures may be subject to change in the future in order to address where gaps in information are detected or external changes necessitate some amendment. However, the Outcomes Framework as presented will enable the partnership to receive valuable information with respect to the strengths and weaknesses within the current SEND and AP system.
- 2.13 All of the changes, refinements and additions made following the public consultation have been collated and a 'You said, we did' update is being finalised so this can be added to the Local Offer SEND Strategy public website. This will demonstrate that we have listened to feedback and show how we have acted upon the feedback.

### 3. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 3.1 Consider the final draft SEND and AP Strategy 2025 – 2029 and recommend their adoption to full Council in September.
- 3.2 Consider the draft Outcomes Framework and recommend their adoption to full Council in September as a 'live working document', noting the ambitions to focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and families.
- 3.3 Receive an update in 6 months on the development of the implementation plans and refinement of the multi-agency workstreams to deliver the strategy. This should also include a progress update with respect to the development of measurable outcomes and further refinement of the Outcomes Framework.

## Report

### 4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. Without having an approved SEND and AP Strategy and Outcomes Framework, there is a risk that work to strengthen outcomes for children and young people with SEND will not form part of a cohesive approach to improvement and will diminish accountability. This would reflect poorly at the point of Area SEND inspection as all Local Areas are required to demonstrate strategic co-ordination and evaluation of the services provided for children and young people with SEND, and their families. Not having a clear and coherent strategy and clarity on what good looks like through the outcomes framework would lead to less effective outcomes for children and young people and their families.
- 4.2. Without agreeing to further work in line with the Local Authority's co-production strategy, implementation is likely to be less effective.

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
Without having an approved SEND and AP Strategy and Outcomes Framework, there is a risk that work to strengthen outcomes for children and young people with SEND will not form part of a cohesive approach to improvement and will diminish accountability. This would reflect poorly at the	<p>Development of the strategy has considered and taken account of a wide range of feedback from children, young people, families and professionals. Local and national best practice has also been considered and included where appropriate.</p> <p>Approval and endorsement of the SEND and AP strategy and outcomes framework is sought from Cabinet and then Council.</p>

point of SEND Area inspection as this would lead to less effective outcomes for children and young people and their families.	
On-going development and implementation is not in line with the Local Authority's co-production strategy, implementation is likely to be less effective.	Agreement to ensure development and implementation of the SEND and AP strategy and outcomes framework is in line with the Co-Production Strategy.

## 5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. Shropshire Council is currently managing an unprecedented financial position as budgeted for within the Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and detailed in our monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. This demonstrates that significant management action is required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all Cabinet Reports provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. Where non-essential spend is identified within the Council, this will be reduced. This may involve
- scaling down initiatives,
  - changing the scope,
  - delaying implementation, or
  - extending delivery timescales.
- 5.2. Involving partners in the development of support for children and young people with SEND will lead to more effective provision and promote early intervention.
- 5.3. Any costs will be contained within current budgets, whether Council or Grant funded, such as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). It is expected that delivery of the strategy will actively support the deficit recovery programme on the DSG. The DSG is in a deficit position of c.£17.6m at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. Council officers are actively engaged in discussions with the DfE regarding strategies to manage the deficit, however, this is recognised as a national challenge.
- 5.4. The deficit position is excluded from the Council main revenue budget through the "DSG statutory override", which refers to a temporary accounting measure in England that allows local authorities to exclude deficits in their Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from their main revenue budgets. This override was initially implemented to address financial pressures on high needs budgets for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and has very recently been extended until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2028.

- 5.5. Extending the DSG statutory override will enable the Government to start a “phased transition process” to reform the SEND system, according to a **consultation document from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government**. This will include working with local authorities to manage their dedicated school grant (DSG) deficits.

## 6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. Where we are able to use Microsoft Teams for meetings to reduce climate impact, this takes place.
- 6.2. Work is developed digitally to avoid the use of paper.
- 6.3. The strategy directly promotes the development of local provision and increasing independence for children and young people, therefore enabling children and young people to be educated as close to their local area as possible. This will bring positive benefits in reducing the time spent travelling and distances covered, enabling more children and young people to travel independently. This will also bring benefits in relation to climate change and the reduced use of vehicles, including single occupancy vehicles.

## 7. Background

- 7.1. Ofsted/CQC expect the local area partnership to update and publish its strategic plan based on the recommendations set out in the outcomes of the Area SEND Inspection report, national best practice and local factors. This enables local areas to demonstrate they are providing effective strategic partnership working to improve the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The strategy and outcomes framework has been informed by all of these aspects.
- 7.2. The Shropshire SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy 2025-29 builds on previous strategies, such as the [SEND Strategy 2020-2025](#), and incorporates valuable feedback from the Ofsted/CQC area SEND revisit inspection, the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) and the national SEND and AP improvement plan as well as feedback from the SEND Area Partnership’s own self-evaluation. This involved key partners including parent carers from the SEND community.

## 8. Additional Information

- 8.1 The development of the strategy and Outcomes Framework has followed a wide range of stakeholder engagement activities, culminating in a public consultation from October 2024 – December 2024. This process enabled Local Area leaders to consider

the wide ranging national reforms planned or underway in this area, alongside the key local priorities identified. The development process is outlined on page 9 of the strategy and has been included as an extract below.

## How have we developed our strategy and outcomes framework?



August 2023 to January 2024	March 2024	May 2024	June to August 2024	September to December 2024	January to February 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership Local Area Self evaluation (SEF) consultation meetings</li> <li>Review and consideration of over 2000 responses from young people (11-18) around youth services in Shropshire. c.10% of young people who responded identified that they had a disability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consideration of national SEND and AP Improvement Plan, including learning from participation in the SEND and AP Change Programme</li> <li>Draft Outcomes Framework V1 presented to Partnership Board</li> <li>Local Area SEF findings feed into development of SEND &amp; AP Strategy and actions prioritised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Local Area SEF presented to Partnership Board and shared with DfE/NHSE</li> <li>Early draft SEND and AP Strategy and Outcomes Framework presented to Partnership Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Area SEF finalised and shared with Partnership Board</li> <li>Draft SEND and AP Strategy and Outcomes Framework revisited with Partner representatives and prepared for public consultation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated Draft SEND and AP Strategy and Outcomes Framework shared with Partnership Board in preparation for public consultation</li> <li>Public Consultation (7th October to 6th December)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update and refinement of the Local Area SEF</li> <li>Engagement work to develop the final SEND and AP Strategy and Outcomes Framework based upon findings from consultation, work with education settings, health and care professionals and Parent Carers.</li> </ul>

8.2 The draft versions of the documents shared during the public consultation are also available here [SEND Strategy | Shropshire Council](#)

8.3 A 'You said, we did' update is also being developed for the Local Offer that will outline the feedback received through the engagement and public consultation and identify where changes and/or additions to the strategy and Outcomes Framework have been made.

8.4 The full Outcomes Framework will continue to be used as a live working document, with regular updates back to the SEND and AP Partnership Board, to enable a responsive approach to refining and further developing the detailed indicators to be used.

## 9. Conclusions

9.1. The Shropshire SEND and AP Strategy and Outcomes Framework details the shared commitment to ensuring that all children and young people with SEND and those accessing AP in Shropshire are healthy, happy, safe and able to achieve their potential to lead a fulfilling life.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

**Local Member:** ALL

## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1 – SEND and AP Strategy 2025 – 2029**

**Appendix 2 – Shropshire SEND and AP Outcomes Framework**