

## **Recommendations from SEND Commissioner's first report to the Secretary of State**

	<b>Recommendation</b>
1	There should be no structural reform to introduce an alternative delivery model for SEND in Birmingham which should instead remain under the direct leadership and management of Birmingham City Council ((BCC) supporting the wider SEND partnerships including with NHS and schools).
2	Recommendation 1 is strictly conditional on the unequivocal support of BCC and on the local authority's absolute commitment to the remainder of these recommendations including the continuing roles of the Improvement Board, the retained Statutory Direction, and the Commissioner.
3	In the absence of the necessary commitment from BCC described in 2, work should start immediately to transfer all of the remaining children's services for which BCC is directly responsible into the Birmingham Children's Trust (BCT), thus establishing through that vehicle, a full-scope children's trust including SEND and education services.
4	The roles of the independently chaired Improvement Board and the Commissioner should be consolidated accordingly with a retained Statutory Direction to oversee and drive the continued improvement work.
5	The Accelerated Progress Plan should be retained but the Improvement Board will assimilate oversight of that plan with oversight of the programme to implement these recommendations to ensure a coherent approach to all aspects of SEND improvement.
6	An early exercise should take place to review the APP and particularly its timescales now that this point in the process has been reached. In view of the scale of the improvement challenge that review should consider all ways to bring forward all possible deadlines with the full cooperation of all parties.
7	That will include taking all possible steps to ensure that the introduction of new SEND data systems are prioritised by all parties and thereby developing a clearer analysis of the financial requirements of future improvement.
8	The SENDIASS service in Birmingham should be externally reviewed with recommendations brought back to the IB in due course.
9	The Improvement Board and BCC should establish a resourced Communications Strategy as a matter of priority to establish more fluent, frequent and effective communications with parents and carers focussing on both the communications of the improvement work but also ensuring effective case work communication.

<b>10</b>	BCC will bring to the IB an update on the progress of the Home to School Transport reforms which are relevant to but not strictly part of the SEND process.
<b>11</b>	The DCS should plan and lead a collaborative process with schools to re-set the wider relationship between schools and the LA, including but not only with regard to SEND, taking the opportunity of her appointment and this report to trigger that work.
<b>12</b>	In the next stage of this process the Commissioner should work with NHS colleagues to offer a closer focus on the health dimensions to this work.
<b>13</b>	The City Council will commit to taking all legitimate steps to regularise the roles of all relevant staff and managers, moving from interim to permanent appointments wherever and as quickly as possible in the interest of stable SEND and children's services.
<b>14</b>	The City Council should consider an exercise to incentivise retention of key staff whose roles are business critical to the successful delivery of SEND improvement.

Owner	Update July 2023
N/A	We agree with and welcome this recommendation.
BCC	<p>The Commissioner's first set of recommendations were formally accepted by the Cabinet in November 2022. The recommendations from the Commissioner's second report to the Secretary of State will be taken to Cabinet in September 2023.</p> <p>The role of the Improvement Board is now embedded.</p> <p>The Director Children and Families maintains regular communication with the Commissioner.</p>
N/A	
Director Children and Families	We continue to work with the Commissioner and use the Improvement Board to help drive improvement.
Director Children and Families	Delivery of the APP continues to be overseen through the SIB. The overarching recommendations of the commissioner's report are integrated in the work of the SIB and monitored in the same way as the APP.
Director SEND and Inclusion	Reviews of the APP were undertaken throughout 2022 and 2023 resulting in a revised version of the APP now signed off by the DfE and published. Progress of the APP is regularly reviewed at the SEND Improvement Board. Six monthly stocktake reviews was carried out by the DfE in June 2022, December 2022 and June 2023.
Director Children and Families	This is covered through Objective 2 of the APP and is currently in progress. Resources have been identified to ensure a sustained data team are in place to support analysis that will inform future forecasts and resource planning according to need.
Director Children and Families	An external review was undertaken. Recommendations of the review were brought back to the Improvement Board and reported to Cabinet. Service is making progress on deliverig its statutory responsibilities, as per the recommendations of the external review. This progress is being closely monitored.
Director Children and Families	This is part of the APP Objective 3. The SEND Communications Strategy was signed off at the SIB in July 2022.

Director Children and Families	Home to School Travel Service has reported progress at SIB. The leadership of both SEND and Home to School Travel Service areas are working closely together to ensure services are joined-up as they are redesigned.
Director Children and Families	Successful Headteacher Inclusion mini conferences took place in June 2022. The establishment of a Head Teacher Reference Group has enhanced the way the local partnership interacts with schools and Headteachers have been in attendance at workshops to co-produce the SEND strategy. A Headteachers' inclusion conference took place in July 2023 and further engagement is planned for the remainder of the year.
SEND Commissioner	A Health summit was held in early 2023.
Director SEND and Inclusion	This work is underway and the redesign of the SENAR service commenced formal consultation in July 2023.
Director SEND and Inclusion	We are working with HR to pursue individual conversations to seek to retain business critical staff.

Status
N/A
Complete
N/A
Complete
Complete
Complete
In progress
Complete
Complete

Complete

In progress

Complete

In progress

In progress