

**Discussion:**

The Head of Integrated 0-25 Disability Services and the Designated Clinical Officer, NHS Kent and Medway introduced this report which presented an updated draft of the Joint Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy.

The draft Joint Strategy had been co-produced with parents, carers and young people and the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB). It included the vision, guiding principles and the key areas of development that would be Medway's focus for children and young people with SEND over the coming three years. The Board was advised that a formal public consultation on the draft Joint Strategy had been launched and was due to close on 23 September 2022.

An action plan with key outcomes, milestones, clear accountabilities and agreed measures of impact was being developed and would be subject to the oversight of the SEND Partnership Board with links into the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Conceding to specific challenges locally and set against a national backdrop of historic poor performance of parts of the system and the impact of a series of issues increasing pressure on resources, Members of the Board welcomed the draft Strategy as a starting point but expressed concerns about deliverability.

The frustrations of Members were acknowledged, and it was reiterated that the Joint Strategy was driven by parents, carers, and young people. Partners in health and education had signed up to the Joint Strategy and with the ethos of co-production woven through it, it was considered that there was a leaver to move forward practical solutions. The importance of being cognisant of best practice and working together smartly was also stressed. It was explained that there was a significant bank of research identifying practical yet non-expensive action.

The Board was assured that, nationally, SEND had a high profile. A Green Paper had recently been published which outlined the responsibilities for strategic leaders and how to work effectively in partnership. A new SEND inspection framework was also due to be launched. It was said that the Integrated Care Board would provide support in ensuring SEND remained a priority in Medway.

Members encouraged Medway residents and stakeholders to provide feedback to the current consultation.

**Decision:**

The Health and Wellbeing Board:

- a) noted the comments made and the draft Joint SEND Strategy 2022-25 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, and
- b) noted that the Strategy will be updated following completion of the Safety Valve Intervention Programme and the outcome of formal consultation.