

## Leeds SENDIASS

Date: 29/04/2024

Report of: Commissioning Manager (SEND Learning)

Report to: Chief Officer Service Transformation & Partnerships

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

Leeds SENDIASS is a statutory service forming part of the Local Offer for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This Service Level Agreement (SLA) brings together Leeds SENDIASS, Leeds City Council (LCC) & Leeds Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB) to ensure that children, young people and their parents/carers are provided with confidential, impartial information, advice and support about matters relating to their special educational needs and/or disabilities including health and social care as it impacts on their education and aspirations.

Leeds SENDIASS operates at arm's length from the local authority, and health commissioners as an easily identifiable service, providing impartial and correct advice in line with SEND law and legislation (SEND Code of Practice 2014, DfE) which stipulates that.

*“Local authorities **must** arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care.”*

The service also offers training, information sessions and support to the local authority and to schools in relation to special educational needs. This includes advising all parties of their rights and responsibilities and, where appropriate, providing support when things go wrong through early disagreement resolution between schools, the local authority and parents, carers, and young people.

### Recommendations

- a) The Chief Officer, Service Transformation & Partnerships is recommended to approve the service level agreements to ensure that Leeds City Council is compliant in terms of its statutory obligations of providing information and advice to children, young people and their families about matters relating to their SEND.
- b) The Chief Officer, Service Transformation & Partnerships is recommended to approve the jointly funded service level agreement with Leeds Integrated Care Board (ICB) due to be in place from April 2024 to March 2027.

- c) The Chief Officer, Service Transformation & Partnerships is recommended to approve the annual contribution from ICB of £58,200 and remains fixed term for three years.

### What is this report about?

- 1 A service Level Agreement (SLA) between Leeds Special Educational Needs & Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), Leeds City Council (Children & Families Directorate) & Integrated Care Board (ICB).

### What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 Forming part of Leeds Local Offer, this proposal will ensure that Leeds City Council meets its statutory obligations regarding providing children, young people and their families with accurate, UpToDate and impartial advice regarding matters relating to their SEN or disability including health and social care.

The proposal supports the Leeds Children and Young People Plan to ensure that all children in all areas of the city have the best start in life and can enjoy a healthy happy and friendly childhood including Priority Three (Fourteen Priorities) to support families to give children the best start in life and Wish One (12 Wishes) where children and young people know where to get information and advice, who to speak to help them find services and support available to them when they need it.

The proposal will provide branded information and promotional materials in a range of accessible formats which are age appropriate. This branding is separate from Leeds City Council or ICB branding. The National IASS branding is also used by the Service where appropriate empowering children, young people and parents/carers to express their views and wishes and exercise their rights in matters relating to SEND law, policy and practice.

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### 3 How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

- Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

Being online, families can access the service directly without recourse to Social Workers or Lead Professionals. The current offer is geographically accessible online via Facebook, YouTube and Instagram across the city enabling C&YP, parents and carers to access the website.

### 4 What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

Consultation has taken place with SENDIASS, Health, Access and Asset Lead and Leeds Commissioning colleagues.

### 5 What are the resource implications?

The service is 'arm's length' and funded by the Local Authority (LA) via the Children and Families Directorate and by the Leeds Integrated Care Board (ICB). There is a section 256 agreement between LCC and Leeds ICB outlining a joint funding agreement from April 2024 to March 2027. ICB has agreed a contribution of £58,200 annually for the duration of the SLA. Currently, as funded by Leeds City Council 4FTE ( 1-PO3 and 3-C3) grade, the Information and Advice Support Service ( IASS) is unable to fulfil the minimum standards within its current capacity.

## **6 What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

If the decision is not approved and we cease the delivery of impartial information and advice, there is a significant risk that more expensive specialist services will receive an increased demand from families and the risk of tribunals will increase exponentially.

Outsourcing the service function will cost more and we would lose a level of established partnership working and experience built over the years.

SENDIASS is a statutory service and the Local Authority would be in breach of legislation should these service cease.

## **7 What are the legal implications?**

Without this service, Leeds City Council would fail in its statutory duty of supporting children and young people with SEND and their families with appropriate impartial information and advice in matters relating to their SEND, health and social care. Leeds City Council could be exposed to litigation through not providing the minimum standards as set out by the DfE.

Leeds City Council could be exposed to a compliance breach with the principles of the Children and Families Act 2014.

## **8 Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

No other option has been considered as the Council is fulfilling its statutory duty in accordance with SEND law and legislation (SEND Code of Practice 2014, DfE) which states that: *"Local authorities **must** arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care."*

### **How will success be measured?**

Quality assurance of the SLA will take place quarterly between SENDIASS, Commissioning and ICB. Data will be submitted prior to meetings detailing the services offered, the uptake of the services and the outcomes of initial service triage systems in place.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

The Service Level Agreement will be in place from April 2024 to March 2027.

## **Appendices**

- N/A

## **Background papers**

- N/A