

Date:	Monday 5th February 2018
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Perfect Pathways
Report of:	Annabel Saunders, Interim Director of Children's Commissioning
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Young People: Councillor Richard Holloway.
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for Choice
Report Author and Contact Details:	Jonathan Skaife, Commissioning Transformation Lead jonathan.skaife@lbhf.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the project Perfect Pathways, a system wide review of services for children with SEND drawing on extensive engagement with families accessing these services and practitioners. The project methodology has benefited from the involvement of the Design Council, whose service redesign toolkit has been applied to improve both outcomes and service efficiency.
- 1.2. Specifically, this report provides an overview of the project methodology applied and outlines the review findings and the service solutions being proposed to improve the experience of children and families with SEND through earlier intervention and improved sign-posting and navigation. Proposed service improvements include:
 - the introduction of a more graduated short break offer;
 - improvements to the referral process into SEND services;
 - the introduction of a key work function to support families to navigate SEND services, and;
 - improvements to the portage service.
- 1.3. The Perfect Pathways project also has a savings target of £365,000 against the Specialist Commissioning Intervention budget.
- 1.4. To date £320,000 has been achieved of the total £365,000 savings target whilst avoiding an adverse service user impact.
- 1.5. Further efficiencies of £45,000 are being sought to deliver the full savings target.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1 This paper provides an outline summary of progress to date for the Committee to note and seeks endorsement for the draft proposed next steps. The Committee is also asked to consider whether any additional activity, beyond that outlined within this paper might add value to the proposed outcomes delivered through Perfect Pathways.

3. Background

The Design Council

- 3.1. Following a successful bid based around the desire to provide improved support for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), the Perfect Pathways project was selected as one of seven London organisations to take part in the 'Design in the Public Sector' programme, which is delivered by the Design Council.
- 3.2. The Design in the Public-Sector programme brings together officers involved in the design and delivery of public services to learn and apply strategic design approaches to deliver impact and improvement for their communities. The focus of the programme is to enable local authorities to use innovative research and engagement mechanisms to effectively harness the voice of families and local stakeholders to develop radically different solutions to challenges whilst operating within tighter financial constraints.

Project Aims

- 3.3. The overarching aim of Perfect Pathways was to develop an improved system for providing targeted support for Children with SEND at a lower cost than is currently spent on the system whilst also improving the service experience and outcomes for families.
- 3.4. The challenge was to take a new look at the way in which we provide targeted support for children with special educational needs and disabilities from the age of 0-25, specifically focussing on:
- Short Breaks for Children with Disabilities
 - SEN Outreach
 - Early Years provision
 - Information, advice, and consultation.
- 3.5. The intended outcome is more efficient and effective services which provide the best value and experience for children and families.

Objectives

- 3.6. The commissioning objectives that Perfect Pathways set out to achieve can be summarised as follows:
1. Create an infrastructure that supports parents to understand, access and journey through the local offer to access the right support, for the right children, at the right time, with the right professionals;

2. Provide a more graduated Local Offer that's better able to meet the diverse needs of both children and parents and build resilience;
3. Shift the allocation of resource towards early intervention to improve both children's outcomes and value for money, and;
4. Achieve a savings target of £365k set against the Specialist Commissioning Intervention budget by 2018/19.

Research and co-design work

3.7 The project engaged parents, practitioners, and providers in a collaborative process of change. The detailed engagement work looked to deploy creative and meaningful approaches to engagement to gather both insight into issues faced in the system and ideas for improvement.

3.8. The methods applied are summarised in the table below:

Research Method	Step Taken
Photo Journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small sample of parents with children with SEND, sourced via the Parent Reference Group, took photos of their lives during a calendar week to help the group consider all aspects of parents lives; not just the contact points with current services. This deep dive into a small sample of parents enabled the design team to consider the whole life experience of parents.
Journey Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed mapping of cases identifying touch points with services; both local authority and health services, and opportunities for improvement.
Parent Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi structured interviews with parents about their experience of services offered.
Observations in Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of days spent observing the existing commissioned services, engaging with children and professionals to better understand the need and the current offer in place.
Parent Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of workshops with parents to identify their experiences of the current system and ideas for improvements.
Meetings with Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each commissioned service was visited and introduced to the program. • Discussions were held about issues in the system and insight findings from the research undertaken with parents was triangulated with professionals. • A meeting was held with the Westminster Special Schools Head regarding SEN Outreach.

Stakeholder Engagement

3.9. Project research and consultation has been extensive, delivered as a joint effort between The Parent Participation Group, The Design Council, current service providers and a core project group with representation from commissioning and the SEND service. Following the research, visits took place to share the findings with a broad range of stakeholder groups, as follows: Early Years childcare board; Special Interest Group, Parent reference groups; CFA Exec board; Child Development Centre; Council for Disabled Children; Heads of service workshops: Early Years and Early Help; Commissioning; Disabled Children's Team, and; SEND management team meetings.

4. Key findings

4.1. This section summarises the findings from the research and engagement phase.

4.2. Parents, providers, and services identified the following themes:

- Parents provided examples of inconsistent advice and support that had been provided by services and professionals. This was not specific to commissioned services but a theme across the wider system.
- There is a lack of consistent knowledge and awareness of The Local Offer amongst some parents and practitioners and services were at times considered to be fragmented and difficult to navigate - transition between services felt especially complex;
- Services should more closely designed around the needs of parents;
- Parents reported experiences where nurseries and community environments had not appeared to be welcoming to parents of children with SEND raising questions about the inclusivity of parts of the mainstream sector.
- The social work assessment required to access short breaks provision was considered intrusive and unnecessary, and;
- A graduated offer is required for short breaks that can be easily accessed.

4.3. In response to the research findings, proposed solutions to the issues identified were co-developed with stakeholders across the system.

4.4. A process of prioritisation and rationalisation was then undertaken to identify solutions which could be achieved within financial constraints. The process has involved:

- A light touch service review to identify the final savings & any further available efficiencies
- Demand and spend forecasts to identify areas where escalating expenditure needs addressing
- The preventative value of each solution to prevent demand for and escalation into specialist provision
- Workshops so parents could identify their top priorities.

5. Proposed Deliverables

5.1. The deliverables identified through the process are outlined below. Next steps will now require more detailed delivery planning and engagement with existing providers.

An improved referral model and front door for SEND.

5.2. The introduction of an effective front door for health notifications and other referrals, which improves the process for identification and tracking of children with emerging SEND. A model has been agreed to capture a pathway leading from front door to a 'Triage' process to enable a screening and allocation process for children and young

people with SEND to be developed. The establishment and promotion of the improved front door will also establish more effective early identification and signposting to the local offer.

An early intervention Key Worker Service

- 5.4. The introduction of a Family Key Working model, which appropriate children and families can be referred to for personalised support. Key workers, directing traffic from the new front door, could enable parents to be supported through a more coherent set of pathways. This service will help them to navigate the SEND support system, access the right services at the right time to avoid escalation of need and be empowered to manage their lives more effectively.

This will be funded by reshaping the existing Portage service

A strengthened and reshaped Portage home learning service

- 5.5. The Portage service is a weekly home-visiting education service for pre-school children with developmental or learning difficulties, physical disabilities, or other special needs. It helps children become school ready by developing the capacity of parents and carers to develop their child through developmental activity.
- 5.6. The existing service currently offers both the portage home learning service and an informal key worker service. It is proposed that a revised and strengthened service specification is produced with detailed Key Performance Indicators. The revised service specification will formally reflect the introduction of a key worker service and strengthen outcome measures. It is proposed that staff from this service are located within the Council to ensure a coherent and integrated service offer for families.

A new Short Breaks core offer

- 5.7. Short Breaks are developmental activities run for children with SEND designed to offer parents/carers a necessary break from their caring responsibilities.
- 5.8. The bulk of the current Short Breaks provision is a targeted offer, accessed via social work assessment. Block contract arrangements with the Westminster Society pay for group centre based activities which run after school, during holidays and weekends. One to one care is spot purchased from a range of providers, available from centres, children's homes and in the community. Some children with highly complex needs also access overnight care.
- 5.9. This current offer would benefit from greater differentiation or graduation with the introduction of a core Short Breaks offer which would provide a lower tier of support available without social work assessment. Discussions with parents and professionals suggests that a core offer could involve new family based sessions, group based sessions and inclusion support into mainstream settings.
- 5.10. The core offer will enable more group based interaction and peer support. Running at a lower unit cost and available without expensive social work assessment.
- 5.11. The Short Breaks core offer will be re-shaped within existing expenditure. A review of the current spot purchased provision will also explore an opportunity to achieve greater efficiency by purchasing provision in block arrangements with a view to reducing spend outside of the existing short break budget.

Out of scope for next steps

- 5.12. An area that was raised by parents but will not form part of the immediate next steps include a drop-in family hub facility/facilities, which provides space(s) for families to receive information advice and guidance and access inclusive activities on an ad-hoc basis.

6. Savings

- 6.1. This section of the paper offers an overview of the savings achieved to date.

- 6.2. The total budget for services in scope of Perfect Pathways was £1.9m, of which circa £819k came from The Specialist Commissioning Intervention budget. There was a savings target of £365k set against The Specialist Commissioning Intervention budget, as per the annual reductions outlined below:

Financial Year	Budget	Savings Target	Cumulative Savings
2016-17	£818, 800	£160,000	£160,000
2017-18	£658, 800	£205,000	£365,000
2018-19	£453, 800	-	-

- 6.3. To date £320,000 has been achieved of the total £365,000 savings target.

- 6.4. We have delivered these savings through the following approach:

- A zero-basis budget approach to the formation of the 2017-18 budget which enabled the removal of several non-essential cost items. This delivered an initial saving of circa £96k. Examples of budget items included one off travel payments, a historic arrangement with a school which was no longer in place, contingency measures for commissioned contracts and payments related to historic service transition periods.
- A new model for Short Breaks Transport, piloted in 2016-17 and rolled out in 2017-18, enabled a saving of £36k. The budget for transport to and from the current commissioned Short Breaks provision has been delegated to the Westminster Society for management which enabled a reduction of buses. Instead, where appropriate, children and young people have learnt positive travel skills to aid their future independence; such as walking to and from the venue or using public transport. These changes have been well received by parents.
- The renegotiation and removal of waste from a range of commissioned block contract arrangements relating to accessible youth and nursery provision to deliver a saving of £188k in line with low service take up and a re-modelling in line with actual usage.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1. This section outlines timescales and next steps to achieve the deliverables outlined. For each deliverable detailed delivery plans will be developed.

The improved front door

7.2. The front door will be amended to include a specific reference for SEND referrals and health notifications by March 2018 according to the following steps:

- January – February 2018: Tweaked design of the front door, ensuring compatibility with wider infrastructure.
- March 2018: Establishment and promotion of the new front door, establishing more effective early identification and signposting to the local offer.

Key working and portage home learning.

7.3. The following phased approach will be taken towards achieving the new key working and portage home learning arrangements.

- January 2018: Test provider appetite to deliver new model within existing financial envelope.
- February - March 2018: Further co development sessions with parents to inform the future model.
- February – May 2018: Co produced service specification informs contract formalisation
- June – August 2018: Service mobilisation including service co location.

Short Breaks Core Offer.

7.4. The core Short Breaks offer will be developed according to the following timescales:

- Jan - Feb: Providers identified to pilot the Short Breaks core offer
- March – June 18: Pilot and mobilisation.