



# TRAFFORD COUNCIL

## AGENDA PAPERS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, 23 July 2024

Time: 6.30 pm

Place: Committee Rooms 2 & 3, Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford,  
M32 0TH

<b>A G E N D A</b>	<b>PART I</b>	<b>Pages</b>
1.	<b>ATTENDANCES</b>	
	To note attendances, including officers, and any apologies for absence.	
2.	<b>MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE 2024/25</b>	1 - 2
	To note the Membership of the Committee including the appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.	
3.	<b>COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE 2024/25</b>	3 - 6
	To note the Terms of Reference of the Committee for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.	
4.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
	Members to give notice of any interest and the nature of that interest relating to any item on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.	
5.	<b>MINUTES</b>	7 - 16
	To receive and, if so determined, to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2024.	
6.	<b>QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</b>	
	A maximum of 15 minutes will be allocated to public questions submitted in writing to Democratic Services (democratic.services@trafford.gov.uk) by 4	

p.m. on the working day prior to the meeting. Questions must be relevant to items appearing on the agenda and will be submitted in the order in which they were received.

**7. LOCAL AREA SEND INSPECTION PROGRESS REPORT** 17 - 24

To receive a report from the Local Area Partnership on the work undertaken since the Local Area SEND Inspection in October 2023.

**8. TASK AND FINISH GROUP DISCUSSION - SEND TRIBUNALS**

To discuss what Members would like the SEND Tribunal Task and Fish group to look at, which had been agreed in the former Municipal Year.

**9. DRAFT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25** 25 - 28

For Members to consider the draft work programme and suggest any items they would like the Committee to scrutinise.

**10. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

Any other item or items which by reason of:-

- (a) Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the Chairman of the meeting, with the agreement of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, is of the opinion should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency as it relates to a key decision; or
- (b) special circumstances (to be specified) the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency.

**11. EXCLUSION RESOLUTION**

Motion (Which may be amended as Members think fit):

That the public be excluded from this meeting during consideration of the remaining items on the agenda, because of the likelihood of disclosure of "exempt information" which falls within one or more descriptive category or categories of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, as amended by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, and specified on the agenda item or report relating to each such item respectively.

**SARA TODD**  
Chief Executive

### Membership of the Committee

Councillors D. Western (Chair), R. Duncan (Vice-Chair), J. Bennett, Z.C. Deakin, G. Devlin, S. G. Ennis, S. Maitland, E.R. Parker, S. Procter, O. Sutton, D. Butt (ex-Officio) and F. Hornby (ex-Officio).

### Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact:

Harry Callaghan, Democratic Officer,  
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Email: [harry.callaghan@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:harry.callaghan@trafford.gov.uk)

This agenda was issued on **Monday, 15 July 2024** by the Legal and Democratic Services Section, Trafford Council, Trafford Town Hall; Talbot Road, Stretford, Manchester, M32 0TH.

### WEBCASTING

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The whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are confidential or exempt items.

Members of the public may also film or record this meeting. Any person wishing to photograph, film or audio-record a public meeting is requested to inform Democratic Services in order that necessary arrangements can be made for the meeting. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer 48 hours in advance of the meeting if you intend to do this or have any other queries.

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**TRAFFORD COUNCIL****MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES 2023/24****Notes on Membership:**

(1) The Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee shall have a membership of 11, or, where this does not achieve the political balance required under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, whatever figure is necessary to reflect the proportional representation of political groups.

(2) The Scrutiny Committee shall be chaired by a Councillor who is a member of the largest political group on the Council. The person appointed as Vice-Chair shall not be a member of the same political group as the person appointed as Chair.

(3) The Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee shall appoint co-opted Members when that committee considers education matters.

(4) The Chairs of both the Scrutiny Committee and the Health Scrutiny Committee shall be appointed as ex-officio Members of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee.

<b>COMMITTEE</b>		<b>NO. OF MEMBERS</b>	
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		11  (plus the Chair of Scrutiny Committee and the Chair of Health Scrutiny Committee as ex-officio Non-Voting Members)  + 5 CO-OPTED MEMBERS + 3 NON-VOTING MEMBERS (when considering Education matters)	
<b>LABOUR GROUP</b>	<b>CONSERVATIVE GROUP</b>	<b>LIBERAL DEMOCRATS GROUP</b>	<b>GREEN PARTY GROUP</b>
Councillors:	Councillors:	Councillors:	Councillors:
Joanne Bennett Zak Deakin George Devlin Sue Maitland Eve Parker Shirley Proctor Denise Western <b>CH</b> Vacancy	Rob Duncan <b>V-CH</b>	Cllr Ennis	Owain Sutton
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SCRUNTINY COMMITTEE CO-OPTED MEMBERS  
FOR EDUCATION MATTERS**

Church of England (*VOTING MEMBER*): ***Vacancy***

Roman Catholic (*VOTING MEMBER*): ***Vacancy***

Parent-Governor Representatives

Primary (*VOTING MEMBER*): ***Vacancy***

Secondary (*VOTING MEMBER*): ***Vacancy***

Special (*VOTING MEMBER*): ***Vacancy***

Teacher Representatives

Primary (*NON-VOTING MEMBER*): *Vacancy*

Secondary (*NON-VOTING MEMBER*): *Vacancy*

Special (*NON-VOTING MEMBER*): *Vacancy*

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **Terms of Reference**

1. The Committee will be responsible for the review and scrutiny of decisions made or actions taken in connection with the provision, planning and management of education in the borough of Trafford and, in particular, all of the functions of the Council as an education authority under the Education Acts, School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and all other relevant legislation in force from time to time. Co-opted Members will be appointed to discuss education matters and will attend the Scrutiny Committee when they consider education matters.
2. To review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with:
  - (a) the provision, planning and management of children's and young people's services and community lifelong learning in the borough of Trafford;
  - (b) all functions of the council insofar as they relate to the provision of opportunities for education, training and learning outside the school environment, including pre-school, adult and community learning.
3. The development of the council's LEA Strategic Plan (incorporating the Education Development Plan) and the Early Years Development Plan.

### **General Role**

4. Subject to statutory provision, to review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge by the Council of its functions and by relevant partner authorities.
5. In relation to the above functions:
  - (a) to make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council, Executive of the Council, any joint committee or any relevant partner authority as appropriate.
  - (b) to consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants.
6. To put in place and maintain a system to ensure that referrals from the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee to the Executive, either by way of report or for reconsideration, are managed efficiently and do not exceed the limits set out in the Constitution.
7. At the request of the Executive, to make decisions about the priority of referrals made in the event of reports to the Executive exceeding limits in the Constitution, or if the volume of such reports creates difficulty for the management of executive business or jeopardises the efficient running of Council business.

8. To report annually to full Council on its workings, set out their plans for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

### **Specific functions**

9. Identify the Committee's strategic priorities and determine the Overview and Scrutiny work programme to facilitate constructive evidence based critical-friend challenge to policy makers and service providers within the resources available.
10. Assist and advise the Council in the continued development of the Overview and Scrutiny function within Trafford.
11. Receive, consider and action as appropriate requests:
  - (a) from the Executive in relation to particular issues; and
  - (b) on any matters properly referred to the Committee.
12. Identify areas requiring in-depth review and allocate these to an appropriate Topic Group. The Committee in consultation with the leader of the relevant Topic Group will set the terms of reference, scope and time frame for the review by the Topic Group.
13. In relation to the terms of reference of the Committee it may:
  - (a) assist the Council and the Executive in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues;
  - (b) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Executive and/or committees and Council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
  - (c) review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
  - (d) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the overview and scrutiny committee and local people about their activities and performance;
  - (e) conduct research, community and other consultation as it deems appropriate in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
  - (f) question and gather evidence from any other person with their consent.
  - (g) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
  - (h) question members of the Executive and/or committees, senior officers of the Council and representatives of relevant partner authorities on relevant



issues and proposals affecting the area and about decisions and performance;

- (i) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working; and
- (j) undertake any other activity that assists the Committee in carrying out its functions.

### **Delegation**

The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee shall have all delegated power to exercise the power and duties assigned to them in their terms of reference.

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## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**12 MARCH 2024**

### **PRESENT**

Councillor D. Western (in the Chair).

Councillors R. Duncan (Vice-Chair), Z.C. Deakin, S. G. Ennis, S. J. Haughey, E.L. Hirst, E.R. Parker, R. Paul, S. Procter and O. Sutton

#### In attendance

Karen Samples	Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance
Councillor Karina Carter	Executive Member for Children and Young People
Jill McGregor	Corporate Director, Children's Services
Pamela Wharton	Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care
Kate Shethwood	Public Health Consultant
Catherine Martland	Violence Reduction Co-ordinator
Lamine Sillah-Camara	Young Person – Trafford College
Roshan Singh	Young Person – Trafford College
Silas Ashby	Young Person – Trafford College
Blerta Shira	Young Person – Trafford College
Harry Callaghan	Democratic Officer

#### Also in attendance

Michelle McLaughlin	Student Experience Manager – Trafford College
Charlotte Brocklehurst	Student Experience Practitioner – Trafford College

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bennett, D. Acton and D. Butt, and Tracey Staines.

#### **40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None were declared.

#### **41. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

#### **42. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No questions from the public were received.

#### **43. PRESENTATIONS BY STUDENTS FROM TRAFFORD COLLEGE**

Students from Trafford College were invited to the meeting to share presentations. Blerta Shira, one of the young people from Trafford College thanked the

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Committee for the invitation and outlined that the presentations included some of the services young people would want any incoming Council to focus on.

Lamine Sillah-Camara presented first, outlining his desire for improved Mental Health Services for Young People in the Borough. This included improved work on preventative measures, establishment of peer-to-peer support, and fostering a sense of belonging for young people. Lamine added further that education and awareness programmes were essential for early identification. He added that this could be established through a mobile app, which resonated with modern young people. Lamine also felt a comprehensive support network and addressing of the gap in Mental Health support, would improve accessibility for Young People to the range of mental health services available.

[Note: Councillor Paul entered the meeting at 18:37]

The Chair thanked Lamine for his presentation and informed him that the Committee recently did a Task and Finish group on Mental Health services, adding that support from young people like Lamine would have been invaluable.

Roshan Singh presented on how young people could benefit from improved environmental decision making in Trafford. Roshan informed the Committee that young people do not have access to enough communal spots to meet and communicate in, which would support students in college to come back after lunch with a refreshed mindset. He highlighted areas such as the Trafford Centre but felt that there should be more local spaces. For example, Roshan mentioned Gorse Hill park, which was near to Trafford College Stretford Campus, however, he felt that this was more oriented toward children, and felt the park could be better advertised. He linked increased accessibility to greenspaces to Lamine's presentation on mental health. Roshan concluded by referring to the imperativeness to preserve greenspace and encouraging biodiversity, which in turn would lead to further social opportunities for young people.

The Chair thanked Roshan for his presentation and cast her mind back to the Pandemic where she felt the air felt fresher and cleaner, with people getting into the environment more. She recognised how more needed to be done in this area for young people, as places like the Trafford Centre were expensive.

Silas Ashby added that there were several parks in Trafford with lots of empty space. Silas felt this space could be embraced, including different plants and notice boards, encouraging young people to notice what was going on around them.

Councillor Procter encouraged the young people to join Friends of Park groups, which could apply for grants for extra funding to improve the area.

Councillor Sutton agreed with Roshan that older teenagers do fall into an unknown space when it comes to parks. Councillor Sutton encouraged the young people to respond to consultations for their local parks, with the youngest age group rarely responding.

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Councillor Ennis felt that public spaces were actively hostile to teenagers, which, alongside the reduction of youth centres in the country over the recent years, meant young people were isolated from places they were able to attend.

Silas said they could get involved with friends of park groups within the College.

Silas Ashby presented on support for Transgender young people in the Borough. Silas felt that work was required to destigmatise the transgender experience. Silas informed the Committee that a recent study had found that 76% of transgender youth had experienced gender dysphoria by the age of seven and 96% had by the age of thirteen. Silas was thankful that the UK education system had made it mandatory to educate children on the topic of LGBTQ+ people in an age-appropriate way, however, was disappointed by the lack of internal services at Trafford Council, only a page on the website listing LGBTQ+ charities. Silas asked the Council to improve the services available within school and the education of school staff, to avoid mistakes made over sensitive topics.

The Chair agreed with everything Silas had said. The Chair was pleased to hear that LGBTQ+ education was now on the curriculum but agreed that work clearly need to be done in supporting the training of staff to greater understand the issues faced.

Councillor Procter was appalled around the Government decision to no longer provide medication to suppress puberty for trans children, which would make transition much harder for young people. Councillor Procter offered for Silas, and any other young people, to reach out to her if they needed any support.

Councillor Duncan thanked Silas for presenting this issue and related to things that Silas had said. He too offered his personal support to any young people at Trafford College having related issues.

The Executive Member for Children and Young People spoke of some of the events she attended in her role. The day after the meeting, the Executive Member was attending the Council Talkshop at Sale Waterside, meeting the Rainbow Reflection group and staff from the Proud Trust where they would be delivering a presentation. The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care added to this, reporting that the Council's Youth Engagement Service had been working closely with the Rainbow Trust to earn an accreditation that highlighted that services operate with the understanding of the challenges faced by children and young people in the LGBTQ+ community. The Director would take back the lack of promotion and communication regarding this, to push the recognition of this accreditation further.

Councillor Ennis thanked Silas for sharing their experience. Councillor Ennis was glad to hear that the work on the lack of internal LGBTQ+ services was underway.

The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance added that she would take the feedback from Silas back to schools and school leaders in the Borough, including the scope for workforce development and training opportunities for teachers.

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Councillor Paul also thanked Silas for the presentation and offered support if they wanted to reach out.

Councillor Sutton thanked Silas for the presentation and recognised how difficult it must be to speak up about these issues. Councillor Sutton referred to the Gender Recognition Act now being 20 years old, and as imperfect as it may have been, if people were only just realising trans people exist, then trans people were not the problem. He highlighted the support from Councillors cross-party in the room, despite hostility in the wider political climate.

Silas finally added how they were glad to hear from allies across Trafford Council.

Blerita Shira provided the final presentation, highlighting the limited job opportunities for young people. Blerita recognised that without a strong economy, young people would struggle to find meaningful employment, such as internships, job fairs or subsidised employment schemes. Blerita added that this leads to financial instability for young people and limits their career prospects. Blerita felt it was important that youth were provided with opportunities such as funding for placements, travel bursaries, and youth focused initiatives to help with economic issues faced. Blerita referred to discrimination for young people in hiring processes, with requirements for roles not being met by young people due to not having the relevant education and experience. Blerita wanted the Council to create workshops for small businesses to attend and offer work experience. Blerita also mentioned the rise in under-35's off work with chronic sickness, linked to the Mental Health crisis. Blerita concluded by asking the Council to provide further investment for skills training and education on vocational training.

The Chair thanked Blerita for their presentation and felt it had given Councillors and Officers food for thought.

The Corporate Director, Children's Services responded that Trafford College had recently hosted a Trafford-based business event, with the Council looking at what partnerships could be entered. The Corporate Director added that it had proved to be a powerful morning, following partnership and political commitment from those in attendance.

Councillor Hirst acknowledged how proud she was of all the young people for being able to come to the meeting and talk on the topics they had.

The Chair concluded the agenda item by thanking the young people and staff from Trafford College for attending. Following this, Members and the young people took a photo for the College's social media. The Student Experience Manager at Trafford College thanked officers and Members of the Council for the invitation.

**RESOLVED:** That the presentations and contributions from the young people be noted and considered.

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**44. WORKING COLLABORATIVELY TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE EXPLOITED OR INVOLVED IN KNIFE & VIOLENT CRIME**

The Corporate Director for Children's Services introduced the report which had been circulated with the agenda. The Corporate Director hoped that the report outlined the range of initiatives taking place across the Borough to address serious youth violence. The Committee were also informed that the term, serious youth violence, whilst being clumsy, was national policy terminology. The report also outlined the partnership work the Council undertook with a range of providers.

The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care added further their hope that the report outlined the breadth of work ongoing, as well as the corporate, strategic, and operational grip in place to prevent and reduce violence and knife crime.

The Violence Reduction Co-ordinator proceeded to speak to the report, touching on the different approaches taken by the service towards violence reduction. A recent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) had looked at the potential cost of violence for Trafford. In 2022/23 this cost stood at around £71million. The Violence Reduction Co-ordinator role, uniquely, sat within the Public Health team at Trafford, with a focus on a preventative model to look at violence reduction.

The Violence Reduction Co-ordinator also highlighted the many systems which could impact upon the risk and protective factors for violence. The Committee were also informed that the 'Greater Than Violence' strategy referred to in the report was written and awaiting final sign off. The Trafford approach was to take a two-pillar approach of prevention and response.

The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care provided an overview of data in the report. This included data on the level of serious violence in Trafford perpetuated by young people and data on the number of young people who were victims of violent crime. The Youth Justice Service had recently seen an increase in the young people arrested and charged for violent offences, which was a concern despite numbers still being low. The Violence Reduction Co-ordinator stressed the importance to exercise caution when looking at data due to differences across the Borough.

The Violence Reduction Co-ordinator added that the JSNA had identified young people coming into the youth justice system at a younger age, and as such, the service had begun providing workshops in primary schools, which had been evaluated to be effective by Greater Manchester Police.

The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care highlighted the detailing in the report of the number of Boards and Forums working on youth crime. These had a strong approach to information sharing. Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester, Kate Green had visited the Complex Safeguarding Hub recently, and was impressed by the level of information the service had in each locality. Collaborative work was also taking place with Manchester City Council colleagues.

The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care finally spoke of the redesign of children's services in Trafford in 2021, and how this had brought together teams

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under the vulnerable adolescent's service, which had increased understanding in the area. The Director spoke to the case examples included within the report.

The Director summarised by saying that the Council was now more aware of the issues for children and young people, and a desire, alongside police colleagues, to jointly prevent further incidents and to work collaboratively.

The Chair asked the young people still present whether they felt safe when out in the community. Blerta Shira responded that as a woman, after dark she did not always feel safe, finding that it was on the responsibilities and morals of others to ensure everyone could feel safe. The Violence Reduction Co-ordinator responded that it was a priority as part of the violence reduction service to create safe spaces for young people and that the feedback would be taken away.

The Executive Member for Children and Young People also attended the event with Kate Green and felt that many young people reported feeling unsafe along the Metrolink lines. The Executive Member also shared a success story which was shared at the event.

The Corporate Director for Children's Services referred the Committee to page 31 in the document pack, which the Corporate Director hoped gave an indication of the commitment to sustain and maintain the Council's youth provision, which included the detached youth work team, Street Talk.

The Chair asked Members if they had any questions for officers.

Councillor Parker highlighted that the report noted that exclusion from school was one of the most significant factors for young people being vulnerable to exploitation. As such, Councillor Parker asked if Trafford was utilising all services of support before exclusions took place. Councillor Parker asked further how the Council was guaranteeing that schools were trauma informed.

The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance responded that the education service had an exclusion officer, who worked closely with schools and the young person to ensure that exclusion was a last resort and could be prevented. The Director did inform Members however, that the fundamental issue was that the decision lay with the Headteacher. The service was monitoring schools which proved to be hotspots for exclusion to ensure that all avenues were being explored. Members were reassured that in comparison to other areas, exclusions remained low.

The Corporate Director for Children's Services also responded that this fed into their role, with the DMT performance clinic monitoring the data as well. Regarding schools being trauma informed, the Corporate Director informed Members that a Bridge Conference led by the Virtual School recently took place which was about being attachment aware and trauma informed. The Committee were also told of an attachment aware programme being piloted called 'Belong', which was also being piloted by Liverpool and Middlesbrough local authorities.

Councillor Procter asked how the Council was going to evaluate the turnaround programme and monitor its success. The Director for Early Help and Children's



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Social Care responded that the programme had governance arrangements nationally and this was reported on a quarterly basis, ensuring that the Council was using the grant as best as possible. The Corporate Director for Children's Services added that this meant the Council would not be marking its own homework, rather, being subject to a national evaluation.

Councillor Paul referred to a recent attack on a young boy in a park and wanted to know what the Council was doing to tackle Hindu phobia. The Corporate Director for Children's Services agreed to take this case offline. The Corporate Director did add that they hoped the principled approach across the services' work provided some assurances in terms of any form of discrimination. The Director for Education Standards, Quality and Performance would take this back to the Council's Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) which contains faith representatives from all faiths.

Councillor Ennis was encouraged by the data led approach in Trafford and asked whether the Council felt their strategy had joint up with all relevant partner agencies or if there were any gaps in information sharing. Councillor Ennis added further what was driving the increase in exclusions in SEND young people.

The Violence Reduction Co-ordinator responded that when the JSNA began, all specified authorities were engaged from the beginning, with communication taking place back and forth throughout. A serious violence group had also been formed, comprising of those specified authorities to ensure that the work continued. The Corporate Director for Children's Services added that joint work information sharing was also supported through the co-location of different services, such as the complex safeguarding team being located at a police station.

The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance responded that it was difficult to tell what was driving the rise in exclusions for SEND young people. The Director added that some cases were due to children having an unmet need. Schools' ability was also mentioned, predominantly in the secondary sector, with the primary sector generally managed well. The Director felt that there was a combination of issues at play. The Director finished by reassuring Members that it was something the service was keeping an eye on within the SEND Ambition plan.

Councillor Hirst referred to her past as a foster carer and her engagement with the service in its different guises. Councillor Hirst felt that in the past the prevention service had been focused on parental involvement, and whether, as part of the prevention service now, if the service were still working with parents.

The Director for Early Help and Children's Social Care responded that engagement from the youth justice service very much took a family first approach. Furthermore, a Parent Support Commission Service was to be procured, with an ambition of the Director's being to have parents delivering support for other parents going through situations they may have experienced in the past.

Councillor Hirst was glad to hear this and highlighted the number of bespoke services available now, in comparison to the past. Councillor Hirst asked how the

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Council shared the information to professionals, parents, young people, and carers so that they were aware of the offers available.

The Violence Reduction Co-ordinator responded that this happened in different ways. This included face to face engagement, a professional's guide for children and young people which had been designed to be a quick flip through document which could be distributed, as well as the development of an online resource called a padlet, and an online notice board to direct people to different sites. The Corporate Director of Children's Services added that having a strategy looking at serious youth violence and what the data was telling the service, would be helped by the range of different services available.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- 2) That the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and collaborative understanding of youth violence in Trafford, be noted.

#### **45. TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The Chair highlighted appetite to establish a task and finish group looking at SEND Tribunals which had been agreed at the previous meeting. This was not to start until the next Municipal Year, and asked Members if they had any items they would like to be considered for the next year.

Councillor Procter felt that something needed to be brought on support for Trans-Children in school following the presentation from the young person earlier in the meeting.

Councillor Sutton referred to the Council's Constitution and how the Committee could include co-opted members. Councillor Sutton felt that in the run up to the new year, the Committee could look again at adding co-opted members to the Committee. Councillor Sutton also asked if it could be looked at to amend the Constitution to include further co-opted members such as support staff representatives.

The Chair responded that reach out had taken place in the past to get Governors to join the Committee, to no avail and highlighted the difficulty to get these Members.

The Corporate Director for Children's Services had contacted the Council's legal services to see what the process was for co-opted members, as any co-option was subject to a transparent and fair process.

The Democratic Officer added that Co-opted members could be looked at again in the new Municipal Year.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Councillor Procter's suggestion be considered at the setting of the Work Programme before the next Municipal year.

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- 2) That the Committee and Democratic Services look at Co-opted Members again before the next Municipal year.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 8.09 pm

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## **TRAFFORD COUNCIL**

**Report to:** Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024  
**Report for:** Information  
**Report of:** Karen Samples: Director of Education  
Shona Gallagher: SEND Improvement Lead  
Sally Smith: Head of SEND & Inclusion

### **Report Title: Progress Report following the Local Area SEND Inspection**

#### **Purpose**

**This report will provide an overview of the progress made against the strategic priorities, following the Local Area SEND Inspection.**

#### **Recommendation(s)**

**That the contents of the report are noted and to receive further updates as appropriate.**

#### **Summary**

Our SEND Improvement work continues to be progressed through Trafford's SEND Ambitions Plan which provides our overarching approach and strategic intent and is scrutinised and challenged through the strengthened governance arrangements that are in place. Our SEND Ambitions Plan drives our response to the inspection findings as we are committed to ensuring that our progress is clear and that, as a partnership, we hold each other to account and critically come together as a system to make improvements. Some of these include:

- Robust governance from across the partnership
- Strengthened SEND performance oversight through data dashboards and performance clinics
- The implementation of the Quality Assurance Framework

#### **1.0 Background**

Ofsted and CQC conducted a Local Area Special Educational Needs & Disability inspection in October 2023. This inspection was conducted under the new Area Send Inspection Framework introduced in January 2023, by a team of Inspectors from both Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) reflecting the system wide approach to SEND.

The inspectors focused on whether:

- Children and young people's needs are identified accurately & assessed in a timely & effective way.
- Children, young people and their families participate in decision-making about their individual plans and support.
- Children and young people receive the right help at the right time; children and young people are well prepared for their next steps and achieve strong outcomes; children and young people are valued, visible and included in their communities

The overall outcome of the inspection was that Trafford's, "local area partnership's arrangements led to inconsistent experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND." Inspectors recognised the strengths and the positive work that is making a difference to our children and young people, but clearly recognises that there is more to do.

Whilst the inspectors provided the Council and ICB with more detailed feedback which highlighted strengths and weaknesses, the report identified the following areas where improvements are required:

- ✓ Leaders across the partnership should ensure that the SEND strategy is fully embedded across health, education and social care. They should tighten their strategic oversight so that all workstreams have equal clarity in how they are mapped out and organised. This is to reduce the disconnect and to improve accountability between strategy and practice.
- ✓ Leaders across the partnership should improve transitions for children and young people between children's and adults' services and within health, education and social care. They should improve their strategy and timeliness in relation to preparing young people with SEND for adulthood.
- ✓ Leaders across the partnership should develop, deliver and embed a clear approach to address how they will support children and young people with a range of mental health and neurodiverse needs. This includes identification, assessment and support for children and young people, with or without a diagnosis.
- ✓ Leaders across the partnership should increase the opportunities for children and young people's voices to be heard and acted on both at a strategic and individual level. They should also develop the range of, and access to, social opportunities for children and young people in order to reduce the current inequality across some areas within Trafford.

It is of particular significance that the Inspection team were clear that leaders from across the partnership were ambitious for children and young people with SEND and much work had taken place to strengthen the planning and governance to drive forward improvement. This, coupled with confirmation that as an Area Partnership we know ourselves well and this is reflected in our strategic planning, means that we are well placed to make further improvement. The Local Area Improvement Plan is detailed through the SEND Ambitions Plan and can be found on the Local Offer <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/SEND-inspection.aspx>

## **2.0 Areas for improvement**

**2.1 Leaders across the partnership should ensure that the SEND strategy is fully embedded across health, education and social care. They should tighten their strategic oversight so that all workstreams have equal clarity in how they are mapped out and organised. This is to reduce the disconnect and to improve accountability between strategy and practice.**

The SEND Steering Group and Strategic Partnership SEND Board provides the mechanism to ensure oversight is strong across all the SEND Ambitions.

### **Key Objectives**

- a) To ensure there is clear sight of the progress against the ambitions plan across the system through having active work streams with clear plans of activity.
- b) To align performance and quality metrics against the Ambitions
- c) To ensure through relevant governance that the work of the Ambitions is clear and transparent with opportunity for escalation and challenge.

- d) To ensure the work of the Ambitions plan and our improvement activity is rooted in and influenced by practice.

### **Progress**

Strategic oversight and strong governance continues to be a priority across the SEND Local Area and this has been achieved in part, through the recruitment of an Independent Chair of the Strategic Board. Members of the DfE and NHS also attend Strategic Board meetings to provide additional check and challenge. The SEND Strategic Board links directly to the Locality Board, ensuring a clear line of sight from senior leaders and the prioritisation of SEND.

Our multi-agency SEND Steering group is responsible for driving forward the delivery of our plans and this is progressed through a series of dedicated Ambition work streams. We believe that this approach means we can connect our vision and aspiration with practice and making a difference to our children and young people. The Steering Group continues to have oversight of the progress against the SEND Ambitions Plan and receive reports from the Ambition Leads detailing activity and impact, to ensure pace and traction continues in those areas. Each Ambition has dedicated workstreams which is cross-partnership and key performance indicators are in place to monitor progress and ensure strengthen accountability.

A summary report is provided to the SEND Strategic Partnership Board by the Chair of the Steering Group which highlights both progress and risk or barriers. This enables SEND Leaders to agree actions that need to be progressed and mitigations to be implemented within the risk register. As parent/carers and schools are represented on the Board, their views and agreement is provided.

Performance reports are provided regularly to the SEND Partnership Board which identify the metrics aligned to the SEND Ambitions. In addition, the Lead Member/Chief Executive Assurance Meetings ensure that appropriate strategic oversight of performance and progress is in place.

### **2.2 Leaders across the partnership should improve transitions for children and young people between children's and adults' services and within health, education and social care. They should improve their strategy and timeliness in relation to preparing young people with SEND for adulthood.**

Work in this area is driven through Ambition 4 of the Strategic Send Ambitions plan, led by the SEND Improvement Lead with colleagues from across Education, Health and Childrens and Adults social care.

Meetings take place 6 weekly to provide oversight of action planning, although there is a degree of overlap with other ambitions meaning work also takes place outside of the formal meeting structures which drives governance.

### **Key Objectives**

- a) Develop and embed a borough-wide all-age transition strategy for SEND ensuring that there is appropriate focus on Preparing for Adulthood
- b) Co-produce practice standards for Reviews across the system
- c) Develop system guidance for the alignment of reviews
- d) Children's aspirations are central to the whole process from assessment and through review.
- e) There are range of housing options that meet the needs of young people.
- f) Transition pathway for all young people with SEND are clear.

- g) Young people and parents and carers have access to clear, accessible information in relation to transition.

### **Progress**

Work has continued with parents and key stakeholders across the system to develop a transition strategy. There has been a workshop with parents and professionals held in March with a further one planned for September. Over 50 parents across the 2 dates will have attended and their feedback is affirming the areas of improvement identified in the action plan. Transition and in particular SEND transition has been supported by the education representatives on the SEND board and conversations have taken place across the community of schools to further develop this work. Lived Experience Advisory Panels

There is ongoing work in relation to annual reviews as a whole, but with a particular focus on transition reviews; this is especially important as we know this is the area where parental feeling is the strongest in that this does not work in the way that it should, to ensure that the support for young people during some of the most difficult times for them is strengthened. The performance information pertaining to annual reviews is available and scrutinised through governance. There are plans to review the paperwork and standards around targeted attendance and expectations around the recording of the meeting by the autumn term of this year.

Quality assurance of a sample of annual reviews takes place and is reported through the Learning and Improvement Group. Work relating to the quality of the plans and guidance reflects the importance of ensuring children's views and aspirations are clear. Steps have been taken to align the review of short breaks packages and the EHC annual review and we are working to explore how this alignment can also take place for children/young people who are cared for and have a Personal Education Plan or have a Child in Need or Child Protection plan.

There are three main pathways for young people who are likely to need adult mental health support:

#### Independence Pathway

The Independence Pathway is for young people with an EHCP but are unlikely to need care and support into adulthood. This is determined by the discussion at the Year 9 Annual Review. A Care Act screening tool is under development to support these conversations too. The Preparing for Adulthood EHC plan from Y9 needs to be focused on the young person's education, employment, independent living, community inclusion and health and include advice and guidance. If specialist advice and guidance is required, a referral into Adult Social Care will be necessary.

#### Neighbourhood Pathway

This Pathway is for young people who are likely to need care and support into adulthood and those interventions will be delivered through the four Adult Locality Teams.

#### Complex Pathway

When a young person has a diagnosed Learning Disability, they enter the complex pathway. This is based on access to community health colleagues (Cheshire Wirral Partnership) and the offer of support applying for those people who are identified with an IQ below 70.

Work on the pathways into adult social care has continued though the pace has been varied between the pathways. The complex pathway is the most advanced and on the whole is felt to be working well. There is more to do to ensure a consistent experience for young people and work is progressing to better capture the performance information.



However, work on the neighbourhood pathway has developed at slower pace but is now working more effectively for children known to children's services. We are now focusing on ensuring that young people who are not known to children's services who may need to access this pathway do so in a timely way. Our newly established post-16 panel and the introduction of a post-16 co-ordinator in the EHC team will help this process.

There has been a further piece of work related to the mental health pathway for children open to CAMHS; although this is in place, the priority is to develop the front facing information for families and this will be launched soon. There is more to do to ensure that all professionals, families and young people have access to information to ensure they are aware of what support exists for young people post 18 in relation to their mental health and how to access it. There will be a very small number of young people who require support through adult mental health teams although this will not be the case for the majority of young people with an EHC plan for Social, emotional, mental health needs.

**2.3 Leaders across the partnership should develop, deliver and embed a clear approach to address how they will support children and young people with a range of mental health and neurodiverse needs. This includes identification, assessment and support for children and young people, with or without a diagnosis.**

Work in this area is driven through Ambition 6 of the Strategic Send Ambitions plan, led by our Health partners, but commissioning is a golden thread running throughout our whole ambition plan.

**Key Objectives**

- a) Children with SEMH and those who are neuro diverse will have their needs met at the earliest opportunity
- b) We will have an evidence based clear understanding of the needs for children and young people with these needs.
- c) Children and young people will have their needs met at the earliest opportunity. This will not be diagnostic dependent
- d) We will have system wide SEND data dashboards at strategic and operational levels.
- e) SEND commissioning is informed by current system wide data and performance information.
- f) Electronic systems are in place and performance reporting is available across service

**Progress**

The Integrated Care Board (ICB) Joint forward plan includes key items which correlate with our SEND Ambition Plan including reducing waiting times and transforming pathways to deliver a needs-led approach. This also includes support for schools for children/young people with mental health and neurodiverse needs, the prevention of Tier 4 hospital admissions, improving speech and language provision and reducing emotionally based school non-attendance.

Since the SEND inspection, a pre and post diagnostic offer has been commissioned to provide timely support and communication for families, provide signposting to available support, delivery of more targeted support in schools and to families, as well as more specialist support through pre and post diagnostic courses. As part of this offer, this will include clinically and nationally recognised interventions including iBasis, PACT and Riding the Rapids. However, the challenge of waiting times to access health services remains a challenge and numbers awaiting diagnosis are continuing to increase. Whilst we are not alone with this issue, the SEND Partnership is sighted on the challenges and are working hard to mitigate against the risks that sit around this.

Commissioners are also currently working with the providers of the Neurodevelopment pathways to identify what support has been provided to each child and provide communication to all families on the waiting list so that they can access support whilst they are waiting. Trafford have bid to bring the Autism in Schools model currently operating in secondary schools across the borough to deliver in primary schools. This will see the offer integrated across 7 of our primary schools and will enable learning to be replicated across further schools in the coming years.

We have commenced engagement work with key stakeholders across Education, Health and Social Care and Children and Families, in order to ensure the strategies reflect the voices of our residents. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has been refreshed and ensures we have the mechanism in place to respond to the needs of our residents. The next phase, through a multi-agency approach, will be to identify the key themes and priorities from this work through a process of check and challenge. This will allow us to ensure our strategies are co-produced and focused on the delivery of services through a needs-led approach.

GM ICB have also developed a SEND performance dashboard which includes key areas of reporting for mental health, community health services, health input in to EHCPs, the neuro-development pathway data, Learning Disability health checks, Dynamic Support Register (DSR) numbers and those accessing services via the DSR. This will have oversight from the Strategic SEND Board as well as internal health governance systems. MFT have commenced the data transfer for the Autism and ADHD pathways which were the remaining services to add to the PARIS system and will be completed in the coming weeks.

Commissioners are working with TLCO to start the review of the community health services. This will commence with the Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy services in the coming weeks. We will also be carrying out quarterly monitoring of community health services from September in order to inform local and regional assurance meetings.

GM ICB, through the Trafford locality, commission mental health services through the Thrive model. Services range from signposting to risk support delivered by NHS Trust and VCSE providers including additional mental health services based within schools and Trafford College. Details can be found in the attached padlet link: [Trafford Thrive - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing \(padlet.com\)](https://trafford-thrive-padlet.com)

The [SEND padlet](#) provides an overview of Trafford's SEND commissioned and community support offer.

**2.4 Leaders across the partnership should increase the opportunities for children and young people's voices to be heard and acted on both at a strategic and individual level.**

**They should also develop the range of, and access to, social opportunities for children and young people in order to reduce the current inequality across some areas within Trafford.**

Work in this area is driven through Ambition 1 of the Strategic Send Ambitions plan, led by the SEND Improvement Lead with colleagues from across the SEND Partnership but most importantly children and young people and parent/carers.

### **Key Objectives**

- a) SEND Partnership activity will be driven by and focused on issues that are important to children and young people.
- b) EHC plans will be personalised and reflect the individuality of children and young people.

- c) All activity will reflect engagement with and the voice of children and young people
- d) Children and young people are consulted and influence the development and transformation of local services.
- e) To ensure equity of access across the borough
- f) To ensure social opportunities are accessible and available to children across a range of needs

### **Progress**

Work is ongoing in relation to the quality of plans and ensuring they reflect the individuality of children and young people. Our quality assurance framework is in place and learning is shared through the Learning and Improvement Group. This then ensures that activity is targeted where improvements are required. To date, the quality assurance activity reflects some improvements in this area within the EHC plans themselves, and there is a much greater sense of young people and their views though we have more to do to reduce variability.

Greater Manchester Youth Voice have been commissioned to deliver a SEND youth panel and this will start in September. This will enable children and young people to be integral to the development and transformation of services. In addition, a SEND participation role to be located in the Youth Engagement Service has been agreed.

A review of short breaks has been ongoing and there has been a series of engagement activity with children and young people, parents and carers. This information will be utilised to inform the recommissioning of services.

### **3.0 Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP): Timeliness and Quality**

Ambition 3 of our SEND strategic plan focuses on improving the quality of our EHCPs and Annual reviews as well as meeting the statutory timescales of the EHC process. The timescales include decisions to carry out an EHC needs assessment, issue an EHC Plan, the completion of a final EHCP and the Annual Review process including the issuing of amended plans following this. The actions are captured in a timeliness and quality action plan that sits below the Ambition Plan.

Improvement in the timeliness of decision making to assess and to issue has been made through improved tracking. Issuing within 20 weeks is slowly improving again but this has been slow this year due to increased numbers of plans. There are currently 3100 EHC Plans, and our latest timeliness figure is 53.4% which is above the national data of 50.3%.

As mentioned previously, the Annual Review process is a key area for improvement. This includes the timeliness of holding the meetings, notifying families of our intentions to amend, and issuing the new plan. We are not only focused on timeliness but also improving the quality of this process and we are revisiting training on person centred reviews for staff and settings. We are working through a restructure in the EHC team which alongside additional investment in targeted posts is designed to improve timely communication to families and young people and drive forward the improvements required.

Greater scrutiny and monitoring of performance data is now happening at all levels in a much more challenging and robust way. Data system development through Power BI to provide dashboard reporting at operational and strategic levels will support this further and is inclusive of dedicated performance clinics which are chaired by the Director of Education.

In addition, our Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for EHCPs is being embedded, with regular multi-agency audit meetings taking place; these have been focused on preparing for

adulthood, Y6-Y7 transition and new plans produced on the template being tested for the DfE Change Programme. Increased audit activity alongside service quality assurance and dip sampling is beginning to show the green shoots of improvement. This includes the following:

- ✓ Where there are cognition and learning needs, EHC plans are clear and well written
- ✓ There is an improved evidence-based understanding of issues
- ✓ The voice of the child/young person is captured well in plans
- ✓ There has been a significant improvement in the quality of social care advice and the use of a new template provided through our involvement in the Change Partnership Programme has assisted with this
- ✓ Speech and Language needs, advice and support has been strengthened

However, there are also some clear priorities for the partnership to continue to improve as variability still remains with some needs better described than others.

Following each audit there is a Learning and Improvement Group (LIG) where learning is shared, and actions agreed. This is developing to include learning from complaints and tribunals. The implementation of both the performance clinics and the QAF are a significant step change in terms of ensuring oversight and influence of day-to-day practice and will be key enablers in driving forward improved outcomes.

Finally, but most significantly, Ambition 3 also includes work on the development of inclusive practice in mainstream schools and sufficiency planning. We remain committed to ensuring we are an inclusive borough and ensuring effective, high quality SEND Support provision is in place for all children and young people is critical to this work. As a result, we have already rolled out the Early Years Ordinarily Available Provision framework which has been developed across Greater Manchester and the Primary and Secondary frameworks are following imminently. These documents will work alongside the Trafford Graduated Approach to ensure that quality first teaching strategies and robust intervention planning is in place to ensure children's needs can be met without the need for an EHC Plan. Area Lead Sencos have been recruited from some of our schools to provide moderation support for our schools.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

Trafford partners are committed to providing the best quality education, care and support for all children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). We are beginning to see the green shoots of improvement which are needed but we know we still have to work hard to maintain the pace and traction required.

We continue to drive forward our improvement work to ensure that we have a well-planned provision that meets the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families though working in an integrated way with parents and carers. We are committed to ensuring that individual needs are met without unnecessary bureaucracy or delay and early identification and support is at the heart of what we do.

Our aspiration is that by working together and investing in our workforce, we will make SEND 'everyone's business'.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024-25**

MEETING DATE AND VENUE	AGENDA ITEM	SUMMARY OF ISSUE	CABINET PORTFOLIO (link to Corporate Priorities)	RESOLUTION/RECOMMENDATION	Responsible Officer
Topics the Committee wish to explore in 2024/25					
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024</b> <b>6:30 p.m.</b> <b>Committee</b> <b>Rooms 2&amp;3, TTH</b>	SEND Tribunal T&F Group	To discuss the T&F group which was agreed in 2023/24			
	Progress update SEND Local Area Inspection	Receive a response from the Local Area Partnership on the work undertaken since the inspection.			Karen Samples Shona Gallagher
	Work Programme	For Members to raise any further topic they would like the Chair and Vice-Chair to consider.			
<b>24<sup>th</sup> Sept 2024</b> <b>6:30 p.m.</b> <b>Committee</b> <b>Rooms 2&amp;3, TTH</b>	Outcome of Healthwatch Mental Health Survey and the service's response to it	Looking at how the results would be dealt with			
	Youth Justice	Receive an update on the YJ business plan and current			Tracey Staines Pamela Wharton

		performance of the service.			
<b>19<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b> <b>6:30 p.m.</b> <b>Committee</b> <b>Rooms 2&amp;3, TTH</b>					
<b>21<sup>st</sup> January 2025</b> <b>6:30 p.m.</b> <b>Committee</b> <b>Rooms 2&amp;3, TTH</b>					
<b>18<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b> <b>6:30 p.m.</b> <b>Committee</b> <b>Rooms 2&amp;3, TTH</b>	Hand over to Trafford College	Students from Trafford College to set the agenda.			

**TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Summary of issue</b>	<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
2024/25	SEND Tribunals					

**Items to be scheduled.**

Date	Title	Summary of issue	Directorate	Timescale	Notes	Outcome
November	Strategic Approach to Family Help and Prevention	Including the refreshed Family Help Strategy				
November	Annual Report on Complex Safeguarding	To receive the Annual Report on Complex safeguarding in Trafford				
TBC	Support for Trans-Children in school and college					
January	Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements					
TBC / November	School Place Planning					
September?	Focus Visit	Update on Trafford Focus Visit for Children's Social Care			Pamela Wharton	
September?	Vaping	Provide an overview report on the vaping survey and associated response to the findings			Kate Shethwood Helen Gollins	

**Other areas mentioned by Members during Work Programming session which may be considered but require further consideration before being decided upon.**

- Vaccination / Immunisation / Measles
- BeeWell Survey
- Early Help Redesign

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