

## **Leader and Cabinet Office**

**Cllr Zena Brabazon**  
**Deputy Leader of the Council**  
**Cabinet Member for Children and Families**  
**Ward Councillor for Haringey**  
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24 September 2019

Dear Parents and carers, and all families advocating for children with SEN and disabilities,

### **RE: Children with Special Needs**

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the work you are doing in advocating for families with children who have special needs in Haringey. I understand that families have recently submitted information to the Fairness Commission regarding issues related to SEND which you would like us to address, and rest assured that we will be looking at all the feedback you have shared and working with the service to explore the issues and make any improvements needed.

I am writing now to underline the commitment that all of us within the Local Authority have made, to a model of co-design and participation with our SEND parents, carers, partners, and stakeholders. This commitment starts with the Leader, myself as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Families and the Director of Children's Services, Ann Graham. It signals an important milestone in how we work with families in ensuring, as best we can, that provision meets children's needs.

I know from my own professional and personal experience, that joint working with families through a co-design approach is essential for children's outcomes. We are committed to developing a co-design model that works and meets the ambition that we share for the services supporting all our children, young people and families. Developing this approach is now underway, and must be underpinned by trusting relationships between all parties. That is vital, and something we know needs to be built in order to secure the very best outcomes for all.

I know that officers have already begun the first steps in engaging with you as parents and carers, and I am taking a close interest in this which will give you the confidence that will grow as we work together and shape our services for all.

As part of our future programme of work, I can assure you that the Council will commit to the principles of timely information sharing, robust and thorough participation, inclusive participation and co-production based on mutual trust and respect. I understand a document is being drafted which sets this out clearly. Our aim, at all times, will be for respectful and productive dialogue.

We are aware that aspects of our ways of working, engaging and shaping services can be improved. We do need to effect considerable change if we are to move forward positively and co-design is critical to that.

You will appreciate I am new to this role, but it is clear to me that the service is now committed to working in a more open and inclusive manner. I support them unequivocally in this and indeed, think it is vital to delivering for SEND. This is a whole area issue, and Assistant Directors from across the Children and Young People's Service including Schools and Learning, Commissioning and Social Care teams are working together with the Head of Integrated Service for SEN and Disabilities in achieving this.

While accepting the issues regarding our past communication, it is clear that our new approach can only succeed by working with parents and carers. Joint working, collaboration, participation, your knowledge, insights and challenge are all needed for co-production to thrive. I urge you to continue to engage with the new approach, work with SEND team, so that we can begin to move forward with a service that seeks to provide the very best outcomes for all our children.

I am very happy to meet you and your groups to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Zena Brabazon', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Cllr Zena Brabazon

Deputy Leader of the Council  
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