

The Local Offer BIG Fortnight 2022 Evaluation Report

December 2022



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Intent	3
Preparation	3
The Planning Group	4
The Event	5
Marketing and promotion	5
Event Analysis	9
Feedback	11
What went well	12
What can be improved?	16
What organisations do respondents want to see next year?	19
What organisations did respondents contact as a result of attending the event?	19
	20
What other comments did people have about the event?	22
Recommendations	25

Introduction

With the removal of restrictions to public outdoor events brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, and the feedback received after the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2021, this year's Local Offer event took place with a number of in-person, as well as virtual, events.

The Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022 (LOBF 2022) was organised and implemented by Swindon Borough Council (SBC), in conjunction with NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (BSW ICB), Swindon SEND Families Voice (SSFV), the local parent/carer support group, and STEP (Swindon) who are commissioned to facilitate SBC's Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) participation group for children and young people.

The Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022 consisted of three mini in-person marketplace events and online groups, webinars hosted on Microsoft Teams platform. The fortnight ended with a main in-person event at The Platform. The Local Offer events took place from Monday 3rd October to Wednesday 12th October. The 2022 event dropped short of a fortnight as there were fewer virtual events held than in 2021. This was due to the limited preparation time to organize the event and the lack of staff availability as a result.

Intent

The purpose of the Local Offer Big Fortnight is to share the extent and breadth of information and services that are available in and around Swindon for local children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and their families.

A range of SEND information, advice and support services were asked to attend the events, based on last year's feedback. These services provided young people, parents, carers, Swindon residents and professionals with the opportunity to hear about the current information and advice and to talk individually with service leads. Attendees were also able to feedback on the range of services present at the event and to highlight any areas of improvement or gaps in the Local Offer.

Preparation

Planning for the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022 started with looking at the feedback received during the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2021. At the 2021 online event, attendees were asked to fill out an evaluation form after the event closed. The form asked attendees and presenters what they liked about the event, what could be improved and what services they would like to see at the 2022 event.

Key findings from last year were:

“Face to face would be better, once restrictions allow.”

“Would be good to have a mixture of face-to-face and virtual.”

“If you were able to get more specialists talking about different things. I was hoping that supporting in schools would be more from the view of a SENCO and what their role was and what I should expect to get from a SENCO.”

Figure 1: Feedback from 2021 Local Offer event

Attendees and presenters wanted the Local Offer to be both an in-person and virtual event. There was also calls for more services to attend the 2022 event, for example school Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs), Speech and Language Therapy, Early Help, Occupational Therapy, Children and Young People’s Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Children’s Mental Health, Educational Psychologists. The full report can be found through the following link: [Local Offer Big Fortnight Big Evaluation Report 2021 \(pdf\)](#).

The Planning Group

The Local Offer Big Fortnight was co-produced by Swindon Borough Council and its partners, including STEP, Swindon SEND Families Voices (SSFV) and NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (BSW ICB).

A planning group, comprising of the SEND Service, Early Help, Early Years, Education, Adult Services, parent and carers support services, and children and young people support services was formed in order to look at

the feedback from the 2021 event and plan on how it will be incorporated in the 2022 event, propose ideas for the format of the event, possible venue ideas and put forward any themes for the upcoming event.

However, although a number of services were involved in the planning group, the Local Offer Champions group were not involved in the planning or the running of the event, which was an opportunity missed, and will be rectified next year.

The Event

Through the planning group and the feedback received it was decided when the 2022 Local Offer Big Fortnight event would be, how long it would last and what the event would consist of. It was agreed that the event would take place on consecutive days at the beginning of October and would consist of three mini and one main in-person events. The mini events were held in local community spaces - in the central Swindon Library, The Everleigh Centre and the Swindon Hub in the Town Centre. The main event was held in The Platform, due to its location being accessible to Swindon residents (travel links and available car parking). Along with the in-person events, eleven virtual events were held that people could attend through booking their place using Eventbrite. As stated above, the event took place over 10 days, between Monday 3 October to Wednesday 12 October 2022. After the Local Offer Big Fortnight had finished, the presentations used in each virtual event were uploaded to the [Swindon Local Offer - Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022](#) page.

Marketing and promotion

The Local Offer Big Fortnight was aimed at the residents of Swindon, including the parents/carers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the professionals that work with them. The marketing of the event included residents that do not currently access these services and/or who are new to the area.

A social media post and poster were created for the Local Offer Fortnight 2022.



Figure 2: online social media post and poster for the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022

The same design and colours were used in the 2022 posters that were used in the 2021 event posters. These designs also replicated the Local Offer promotional materials that were made earlier on in the year. This synergy created an identifiable brand for the Local Offer and will help people to visually recognise the Local Offer and Local Offer events (see below). The design was also used to promote each of the in-person events. This meant advertising could be online, via email and on posters at each of the venues at least a week before the events took place.



Figure 3: Event posters for the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022

The Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022 was promoted comprehensively across Swindon Borough Council's social media channels.

SEND NEWS SPLASH
ISSUE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY SEVEN
26TH SEPTEMBER 2022
PAGE ONE

Help us get our children to school!
As many of you are aware, the Council has a statutory duty to provide free home to school transport for mainstream pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disability where they are eligible. We transport over 500 children with SEND twice a day, with approximately 100 minibuses supplemented with a small network of taxis.

The majority of our routes require Passenger Assistants, and we are currently facing a staffing crisis in this area of work despite on-going recruitment campaigns. If we cannot provide Passenger Assistants for these routes we cannot get our children to school. This has implications, not just for their attendance and education, but places additional pressures on families who have to make emergency short-term arrangements for childcare.

Please can we ask for your assistance in advertising across your staff teams, including domestic staff and mid-day supervisors and in your school renews the current recruitment campaign [Domestic Passenger Assistants](#)

The Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022 IS SOON!!

The Local Offer will be hosting various events, both virtual and in person, between Monday 3rd October – Friday 14th October 2022, including the Local Offer Big event on 12th October at The Platform.

These free events are for young people, parents, carers and the professionals that work with them and will provide information and advice on the services available for young people aged 0-25 with a support need.

Please come along, and share this information with parents, carers and other professionals that you work with.

More information about this event is on the [Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022 page on the Swindon Local Offer](#).

Here are a list of the confirmed virtual events that are taking place during the fortnight and details of how to book.

Aiming High - social and leisure activities for CYW with disabilities
When? Monday 9th October 2022 at 10:00-11:00
What's it about? Aiming High provide opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to enjoy a range of social and leisure activities outside of school hours (this is known as the Aiming High "social offer" for short breaks). This could range from information and advice about activities, support to access mainstream activities or the provision of Aiming High specialist services. The service is for children and young people aged from 0 to 19th birthday. This session is an opportunity to hear more about Aiming High and the types of support available, and ask any questions you may have.
Who's presenting? Giselle Penninger and Rebecca Curtis, Inclusion and Outreach Officer's for the Aiming High Team
To book on this session please select the [Eventbrite link](#).

The Participation Team: how we work with Swindon's Children, Young People and Families to improve our services
When? Monday 9th October at 10:00-14:00
What's it about? The Participation team will discuss examples of our work with children, young people and families in Swindon through our care experienced groups Raise Your Voice and Voice and Influence Panel, Swindon's Youth Council for under 11s and with parents who have experienced social care processes through our Family Advisory Board. Our presentation will cover what "lived experience" is, why working in co-production with children, young people and families is so important, the work we have done so far and changes we hope to see.
Who's presenting? Claire Wille Participation Support Officer and Laurie Roche, Participation Administrator in the Quality Assurance and Review Team.
To book on this session click on the [Eventbrite link](#).

CONTACT THE LOCAL OFFER ON LOCALOFFER@SWINDON.GOV.UK Issue 137 Tuesday 20th September 2022

Figure 4: SEND News Splash advertising the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022

SBC Facebook

Reach	Reactions, likes, comments	Shares	Link clicks
2,187	6	10	16

School Newsletter

Date	Audience	Reach
23/09/2022	Schools	225
	Swindon Borough Council	130

SEND News Splash

Date	Total newsletters sent
20/09/2022	660
26/09/2022	
03/10/2022	
10/10/2022	

Monthly SEND News Splash

Date	Total newsletters sent	Opened/%	Total link clicks
21/07/2022	660	334/50.61%	2
01/09/2022	732	373/50.96%	11
29/09/2022	761	376/49.47%	6

Swindon SEND Families Voice

Coms	Total newsletters sent/Reach
e-bulletin	654
Facebook	4,034
SEND Room	1,596

According to 2020 mid-year estimates, Swindon has a population of 222,881 people ([Estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)). The promotion of the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022 reached 5.06% of the Swindon population (11,284 people – this figure may need to be adjusted due to overlap as some people may have been reached multiple times). The reach of the event in 2022 decreased, compared to 2021 (37,000 in 2021 down to only 11,639 in 2022). It is also worth noting that of the Swindon population (as recorded in the May 2022 Census), 4,847 pupils have SEN support and there are currently 2,320 open EHC Plans as recorded in the EHCP Master Weekly Scheduled Report.

Swindon SEND Families Voice's social media site(s) was the most popular way that parents found out about the 2022 event. Their promotion of the event started from the 9th September and continued throughout with posts on the whole event, the in-person events and the virtual events as they happened. The event was promoted in their ebulletin, websites (although figures were not available to show how many hits the page received), Facebook and at events like Branches, their parent/carer support group. Swindon SEND Families Voice reported that the most viewed posts were the ones that promoted The Platform event, which had the widest range of services attending. This shows that parents were more interested in the event where they could get the most information in one place (see Recommendations section for proposals on how next year's event can be improved).

Event Analysis

This year 72 people signed up for at least one of the virtual events at the LOBF 2022, compared with 205 people at the 2021 and 269 at the 2020 event. The programme of events for 2022 was considerably smaller than previously with only eleven virtual events available. The Local Offer Big Event in 2021 had more than double the number of virtual events and in 2020 there were more than four times the amount of sessions available. However, it is worth noting as mentioned in the introduction that in 2020 and 2021 in person events were unable to be run, so this will have influenced both the number of virtual events run and the number of people attending.

The most signed up for sessions in 2022 were:

MOST ATTENDED VIRTUAL EVENTS AT THE LOBF2022

27 attendees

An update on Swindon's Neurodevelopmental pathway

18 attendees

Education, Employment & Training Service Q&A Panel

12 attendees

Children's Direct Payments for social and leisure services

11 attendees

An overview of Swindon CAMHS

9 attendees

The importance of regular school attendance

In terms of the live events, by comparing the attendance to all four of the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022 events with the first Local Offer event, held on Tuesday 12th March 2019 at the STEAM Museum's Hawksworth Hall, it could be said that the 2022 event didn't perform as well as the 2019 event. Looking at these figures (see table below) the 2022 event had less than half the amount of parents/carers attend the events compared to that of the 2019 event. It should be noted that the 2022 event also did not register a single young person's attendance at any of the events and one virtual event had to be cancelled due to presenter illness.

However, the 2022 event did register 10 adults with SEND, two police officer's and one parent of a carer attend the event at Swindon Hub. This shows how valuable it was having an event in the community, at a venue with other activities going on.

Year	Parent/carers attended (total)	Professionals attended (total)	Young people attended (total)	Other	Total
2019	55	18	4	Not recorded	77
2022	24	11	0	14	66

Figure 5: Local Offer in person event comparison 2019 vs 2022

Feedback

Feedback on the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022 was gained through both an online survey and paper survey for those who could not engage with the online version. There were two versions of the survey, one for attendees and one for stall holders/presenters. The feedback survey was sent out from the 3rd October to the end of November 2022. The link to the survey was sent to all presenters and facilitators of the virtual events and stall holders at the in-person events to complete. It was also sent to all attendees at the events to complete. The QR codes to access the surveys were available at all the in-person events where feedback tables were present to encourage attendees to give their thoughts and opinions on the event(s) they have attended. A few paper copies were available for use by attendees who may have not been able to access the survey via the QR code.

From all the events in the Local Offer Big Fortnight 2022, 44 completed responses were received – 12 more than last year’s total. Attendees were asked what they liked about the event, what could be improved and what new organisations/topics would they like to see in next year’s event. The survey responses were mainly answered by parents and stall holders. Attendees of the Local Offer Big Fortnight events found out about them through promotions via Swindon SEND Families Voice, SEND News Splash and SEND Families News Splash.

To summarise, the below analytics all show positive reactions when asked about the timing of the event, the quality of the information received before the event and the venues.

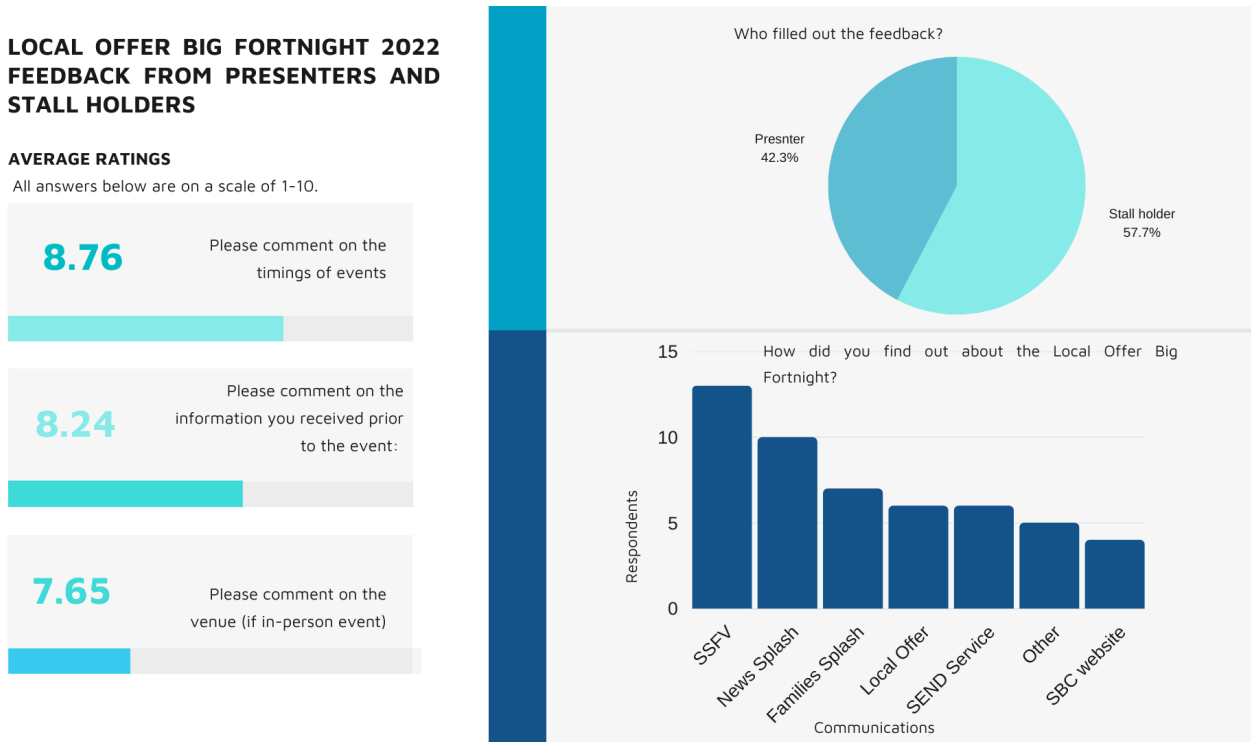


Figure 6: Summary of feedback from presenters/stall holders

LOCAL OFFER BIG FORTNIGHT 2022 FEEDBACK FROM YOUNG PEOPLE, PARENTS/CARERS, PROFESSIONALS

AVERAGE RATINGS

All answers below are on a scale of 1-10.

8.32

Please comment on the venue (if in-person event)

8.00

Please comment on the timings of events

7.64

Please comment on the information you received prior to the event:

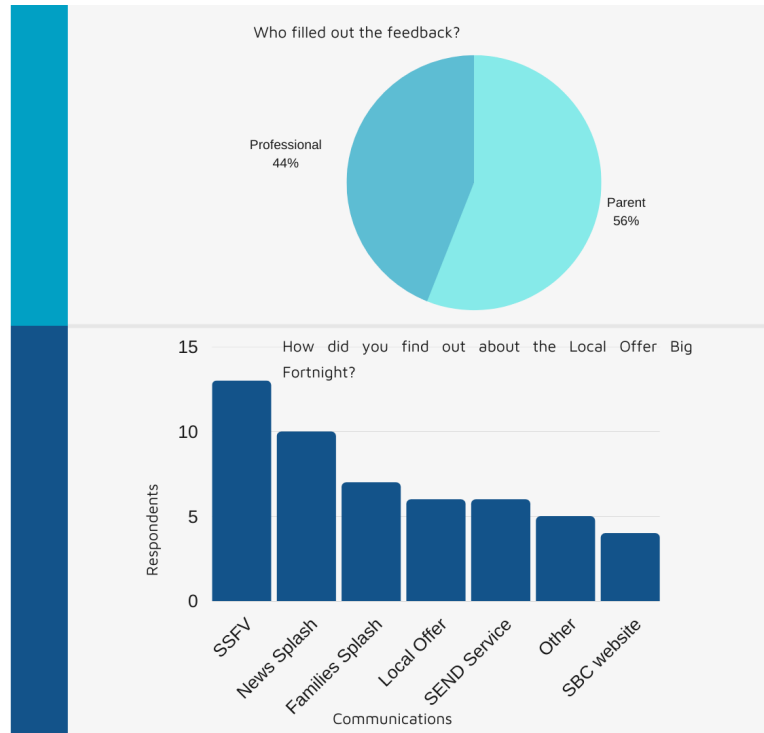


Figure 7: Summary of feedback from attendees

What went well

When asked what they liked from this year's event, 8 respondents (5 presenters/stall holders and 3 attendees) used the word 'opportunity'. Presenters/stall holders said that a positive was: "Having the opportunity to meet with parent/carers and colleagues from other services." An attendee also agreed and said that they liked: "The number of opportunities to meet with services in many different locations in Swindon." Another said that the versatility of the event was also a positive. They stated: "We also had the opportunity to choose in person or online and due to capacity in the team, it was best for us to do online. We believed that the people who might attend would be care-experienced or have lived experience and therefore meeting online would allow them to protect their identities should they wish to."

For professionals, the event was also another chance to network with other professionals, with 5 respondents agreeing. One presenter/stall holder stated: "It was a good event to network at and talk to some of the other services to see how we can fit together, refer, etc."

For attendees (the parents/carers, professionals who gave feedback), they found that the event was friendly and supportive. One attendee said that the event was: "Very friendly and a lot of support and advice (were given)." Another comment to highlight what attendees liked about the event said: "Speaking to someone in person and not being rushed." The attendees also commented on the networking opportunity that the Local

Offer event provided. One said: "Nice to catch up with people that have helped in the past. Made useful new contacts."

The Local Offer event gave attendees and presenters/stall holders the opportunity to connect with services, talk to new service users and find out what services and information is out there that could benefit them/their service users.

We were given the scope to discuss and shape our own presentation - this allowed us to focus on the Local Offer but also on the importance of co-production when writing the content on the local offer. It gave us the opportunity to discuss our wider work and link to the Local Offer. We also had the opportunity to choose in person or online and due to capacity in the team, it was best for us to do online. We believed that the people who might attend would be care-experienced or have lived experience and therefore meeting online would allow them to protect their identities should they wish to.

It was nice to speak to parents and to have the opportunity to take the time to listen to their situation.

Getting to meet and chat with other professionals.

It was a good event to network at and talk to some of the other services to see how we can fit together, refer etc.

Opportunity to network with other stallholders

Got to speak to other teams

I enjoyed being able to talk to parents face to face which was easier to ascertain that they understood and received the information they needed. It was also useful to speak to other professionals that were there.

CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS

It was good to have free rein on what we spoke about, and the PowerPoint slides were easy to use with good instructions

The event in the Hub was well located due to the cafe and other activities going on in the Hub. For the parents/carers that did attend, it felt like they really benefitted from the opportunity to speak to a professional face to face.

The opportunity to 'be seen' as a professional outside of usual referral processes.

To support the local offer and get to know the Swindon Borough Council team better.

Having the opportunity to meet with parent/carers and colleagues from other services

Range of services, parking nearby, in town centre it's central

What did Presenters/ stall holders like most about the event(s) they were involved in?



Range of speakers and Q & A session.

Amazing ladies, lots of info, chatty and friendly.

Very friendly, very supportive.

Able to speak to someone at transport.

VERY INFORMATIVE.

Very friendly and a lot of support and advice

The personal information

Teams meetings accessible from home and during school hours.

Very detailed and excellent, approachable and warm presenters.

Speaking to someone in person and not being rushed

The number of opportunities to meet with services in many different locations in Swindon.

Low key environment. Plenty opportunity to talk. Nice to catch up with people that have helped in the past. Made useful new contacts

Valuable information relevant to my role

Informative and an opportunity to ask questions

Chance to speak to professionals on the stalls and chat to colleagues I know.

Great selection of presenters

Informative virtual event and good to be able to attend online

What did attendees like most about the event(s) they were involved in?



What can be improved?

The most common suggestions were around availability and attendance. Presenters and stall holders were concerned about the low number of attendees at the events, although acknowledging that this was not the organisers fault, stating that there might have been too many events running. One stall holder said: “There were only about 6-8 parents who attended the event at the library, and I understand the pattern was the same at some of the other events and a number of parents were the same (going from one event to the next). This did not therefore seem an efficient use of resources when there were at least 8 professionals there at the library as facilitators/stall holders for the whole morning.”

Three respondents (2 stall holders and 1 attendee) suggested how this issue can be solved, by simply having fewer events. This is summarised by one respondent who said: “In future I think it would be much better for parents (and more cost effective for the Local Authority) to have one full day event in one large venue only, where the whole range of children's support services are present as stall holders, so parents can talk to anyone they want to all in one hit, rather than feeling they're being passed around the houses.” Two attendees wanted the events to be at different times so people could attend who may be unavailable during normal work hours, and six respondents (two attendees and four presenters/stall holders) stated that more advertising was needed to make people more aware of the event. One person suggested that the events should have been promoted in school newsletters which could have been shared with parents in terms of what events were taking place, where and when. Please note that promotional material was sent out in the September edition of the School Newsletter (see details of circulation).

In addition, promotion of the event could be improved in future years by involving the Local Offer Champions more in the development and promotion of the event to each of their area's service users.

What presenters/stall holders think can be improved

Having a venue that is suitable

There were only about 6-8 parents who attended the event at the library, and I understand the pattern was the same at some of the other events and a number of parents were the same (going from one event to the next). This did not therefore seem an efficient use of resources when there were at least 8 professionals there at the library as facilitators/stall holders for the whole morning. The parents I spoke to all just seemed to want informal consultations about their individual children from any professional they could get to speak to, rather than picking up information about particular topics. I ended up doing a lot of signposting to other services who weren't there themselves to talk about their own role (e.g. SIAS, SSFV, STEP, TAMHS). In future I think it would be much better for parents (and more cost effective for the LA) to have one full day event in one large venue only, where the whole range of Children's support services are present as stall holders, so parents can talk to anyone they want to all in one hit, rather than feeling they're being passed around the houses.

More publicity. Maybe people prefer 1 big event like the Transitions Roadshow. Very quiet after 12.30pm

More space at the venue. I felt squashed in.

It would be better if more people could attend/were made aware that the event was going on. An example could be getting schools to share with parents what is going on.

A bigger turn out (out of our control I know) but we had very little parents/families.

I presented a virtual event and an in-person event and sadly the number of people attending was quite small. Only 7 people attended the virtual event and that was mostly professionals and only 3 parents and 1 professional attended the event at the Everleigh Centre. So, I feel that more work needs to be done to get the message out to people about the LOBF, particularly to parent/carers. The room at the Everleigh Centre was a bit cramped after the presenters were all in place with their tables and displays. Add in a few parents and it became quite crowded and loud.

Please offer decaf coffee. Maybe one event for parents and carers to attend and a separate one for organisations/SBC to attend.

More footfall

There was nowhere to fill up a water bottle at the Central Library (I did ask the Library staff and they told me they couldn't fill it up for me). It might be useful to have events at the different times of the day so that people working during those times are able to attend a different event. If we could plan to be at The Hub when family groups are running this might help us to target our stalls at people with children. It would also be great to have an event where all of the providers are attending at once so that when parents/carers are asking for particular support, we can direct them to the right table. During the events I attended, parents/carers asked for particular services but they were not attending that day.



What attendees think can be improved

More advertising.

(Travel team) able to access appeal and case numbers to advise appropriately.

In person evening session

One didn't have the people there that were meant to be (SENCO).

Access to the PPT. There was confusion with logging in to the event and I was in the wrong 'room' so missed the start. I used the link I was sent - as did several others. I could have missed the whole thing!

Better advertising and explanation of what the event is.

Open for different times and days to allow for people needing choice of availability.

Felt rushed as it was only an hour so very basic information given

Have one event that all providers are at. Each event had different stall holders. I would like to see how many actual (members of the) public came to these events. There were very few in the different ones I attended. Would be interested to know why that might be the case. I have to say that the Direct Payment talk was poor. It only took a few minutes and I feel it probably didn't do the subject justice.

Confusion over timing, started an hour later than I expected so I couldn't attend the full event.

For all services who were on the agenda on a specific day to turn up - having a '2nd in command' would have helped so there was no single point of failure and sessions didn't need to be cancelled (and) members of the public didn't need to turn up disappointed that the people they had travelled in to see, were not there.



What organisations do respondents want to see next year?

In terms of the services that respondents want at the next Local Offer event, presenters/ stall holders wanted to see a multi-agency approach to the next event with a mix of different services in attendance that contribute to the EHCP. In terms of individual organisations and services that people want to see, three people mentioned SEND Information Advice Support (SIAS), Adult Social Care, and Speech and Language Therapy. Two people wanted Educational Psychologists and more around mental health. Other services mentioned included SEND Service, SEND Travel, Transition to Adulthood, Swindon Advocacy Movement (SAM), Swindon Carers and parent/family support services.

What organisations did respondents contact as a result of attending the event?

The most popular organisation that was contacted after the Local Offer Big Fortnight was Swindon SEND Families Voice, where four people said that they contacted the parent support group. Three people said Aiming High, two people each said SEND Travel, Prime Theatre and Early Years. Other services mentioned include SEND Service, Adult Transitions, Early Help Hub and Fostering.

What new organisations/topics do presenters/stall holders want to see included next year?

It would be good if we could get a multi-agency event going with the different EHCP services such as SEND, EP, OT, SALT, TaMHS, PT, EHH, SIAS etc.



Something that comes up often regarding children that are referred to us is mental health and anxiety so perhaps more information about this could be provided.



I am not sure who attended the other days but maybe there could be more of a mix at each event.



SIAS service could be helpful for parents and families to learn about.



Wider representation from educational and health services.



What services did presenters/stall holders contact as a result of attending?

Fostering



Collective food banks



Adult transitions



Early Years



Have already developed a closer working relationship with Swindon SEND Families Voice from meeting them at the Everleigh Centre and attended one of their stay and play sessions to give information about Aiming High. Might also contact Parenting Hub for advice.



What new organisations/topics do attendees want to see included next year?

More from transport. 🔍

More mental health organisation's. 🔍

Adult social care x 2 🔍

Salt, Ed Psych, SIAS 🔍

Education people here 🔍

ADHD Attachment Support for children who are adopted, Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) 🔍

Social care, transition to adulthood, parent/family support services 🔍

Please include SAM and Swindon Carers. 🔍

More services such as Speech and Language, Occupation Therapy that are able to support and share advice or signpost parents/professionals 🔍

What services did presenters/stall holders contact as a result of attending?

Transport and SIAS 🔍

Send transport 🔍

Austism service 🔍

Early hub, early years, aiming high 🔍

I can signpost more effectively. 🔍

Swindon SEND Families Voice x 2 🔍

Prime theatres SSFV (reconnect) 🔍

SEND (service) 🔍

Aiming High 🔍

Prime Theatre 🔍

Depends who I am working with at the time. I make contact with other professionals when I have a case I need to discuss. 🔍

Clearer understanding around Neurodevelopmental pathway referrals 🔍



What other comments did people have about the event?

There were positive comments made regarding the event. One attendee stated: "This was really useful and informative and not something I have seen in other local authorities. Thank you!" A presenter/stall holder also said: "Huge well done for pulling off a set of brilliant events - thanks for asking us to take part 😊"

Linking back to things that will need to be improved for next year's event, one person acknowledged that making people aware that the event was taking place and then getting people to attend the event were the main stumbling blocks. The presenter/stall holder stated: "It was a good event just a shame it was poorly turned out by families/parents." An attendee noted: "I did not know this event was taking place."

Other comments left by respondents gave a variety of suggestions about what could be improved on. These suggestions included:

- changing the way the event is promoted on the Local Offer from being date based to subject based, making it easier for people to find the services they want to see.
- to have an event where all the services attended and maybe replicate that event and invite the same people in case parents/carers are unable to attend the first event.
- an in-person evening event could benefit people who have commitments during work hours.
- looking more at what families/community want at the next event in an attempt to improve attendance - as one person stated: "I feel that the parents who did attend really benefited from having the time to be spoken to/felt listened to."
- involving the Local Offer Champions more in the planning and promotion of the Local Offer Big Event moving forwards.

What other comments did presenters/stall holders make about the Local Offer Big Fortnight?

Huge well done for pulling off a set of brilliant events - thanks for asking us to take part 😊

I feel that the parents who did attend really benefited from having the time to be spoken too/felt listened too.

I feel the LOBF is a great opportunity for parents and professionals to get more information about support services for their children, but that some improvements could be made to make it more successful. When looking online for available events, they were displayed under days/dates rather than topics or services, so it was difficult to find what you were looking for as had to click into each date. A parent that we spoke to at the Everleigh Centre commented that they were going to another mini event the next day to speak to a different organisation. It seems a shame that they had to go out on 2 different days to see who they wanted. This would also prove difficult if parents work and couldn't get out of work on different days. I believe in the past that larger events were held with all organisations present and I think this would work better for parents and professionals as a one-stop place to see what is available and pick up information. The larger events could perhaps be held at least twice on different days/times and different locations.

Needs to be a big one-day event with other online sessions.

We spoke to 15 parents /professional throughout the day. People must take advantage of this event!

Just that venues are suitable as the platform was too big for the number of stalls there. It was also very cold in the building.

Parents all thanked us for being there and said it was a good idea.

It was a good event just a shame it was poorly turned out by families/parents.

The event was not very well attended by families/the community, maybe we need to consider this for next year - what is it that they want?

What other comments did attendees make about the Local Offer Big Fortnight?

It has been a help to get a better understanding of the different services on offer.

I did not know this event was taking place

Good event - just need to keep promoting widely.

I found it really useful

Very limited selection of events. No online events with SEND service was a big disappointment, not all parents are able to leave the house during the working day so had no ability to hear from SEND service. Events in previous years have been much better organised LA must not give out attendees emails on group emails

It would be good to go back to talks in person (this happened pre Covid) and there was a good uptake. Some sessions e.g., how to get an EHCP and reasons to get refused. Only recently a parent didn't know about the local offer and tried to do the EHCP thing on their own. They got refused as the young person was being EHE so no professionals, until recently, were working with them.

No events attended as I was not aware of the event until after..

Useful event

Good advertising and enjoyable. Interest(ing) choice of topics.

This was really useful and informative and not something I have seen in other local authorities. Thank you!

Recommendations

Based on the feedback received and detailed above, the Local Offer Development Officer would recommend the following changes/improvements when planning the 2023 Local Offer Big Event:

- Review the structure of the event itself. A few professionals stated that there were too many events; others said that attendees came in to see a service but left disappointed as the service that was advertised was unable to attend last minute or were at a different event. Incorporating the Local Offer event with the Transition Roadshow would provide a multi-agency event that young people can attend and benefit from. Also, moving the Transitions Roadshow, which has previously been a June event, to the autumn would mean that young people could gain information to inform their placement choices in time for annual phase transfers (February and March each year).
- To have a more comprehensive promotional programme for the 2023 Local Offer event. The target audience being unaware of the event, leading to low attendance, seemed to be the main concerns in the feedback, which needs to be improved for next year's event. Working with each service and the Local Offer Champions, as early as possible, providing them with the date of the next Local Offer event and promotional materials to distribute and discuss with service users and at events, could make a big difference to attendance in 2023.

It is therefore proposed to amalgamate the Local Offer Big Event with the Transitions Roadshow, holding one single event in October each year. This would give a large multi-agency event covering both the Local Offer and Transitions Roadshow, with different EHCP services present, and with SEND Services sharing information, advice and support for children and young people with SEND and their families. It is planned to fully engage the Local Offer Champions in the planning and promotion of the event in 2023 and moving forwards.