

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL**22ND JUNE 2017****Special Education Needs and Disability and Inclusion Transformation Update****Report of the Director for People**

Strategic Aim:	Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr D Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Education Mr R Foster, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People (Safeguarding)	
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Ward Councillors	All	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Panel:

1. Comment on the draft Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy and the update on the SEND transformation actions
2. Consider how the Panel may provide future oversight and scrutiny of the transformation plan

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The service has rewritten the SEND and Inclusion Strategy which sets out Rutland's vision for children with SEND and additional needs and which is currently out for consultation, and as part of this exercise to seek comments from the panel.

1.2 The presentation provides panel with an update on the transformation activities within the service and across the partnership for children with SEN and disabilities.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 There are statutory obligations placed on Local Authorities, health providers and schools, to support children with additional needs and disabilities, such as the SEND Code of Practice 2015, and the Safeguarding in Schools Guidance (DfE) 2015.

- 2.2 By 1 April 2018, Local Authorities must have transferred all children and young people with statements of Special Educational Need (SEN) and who are eligible for an Education, Health and Care plan, (EHCP) to the new SEND system. An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 years who need more support than is available through special educational needs support in school. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.
- 2.3 The above encompasses the Local Authority's obligation to provide/create sufficient places for all pupils including those with SEND and the requirement for Local Authorities to have a SEND 'Local Offer'.
- 2.4 The demand for services and support for children with SEND in Rutland is growing; currently there are 194 children with Statements/EHC Plans compared to 174 in 2014/15. This reflects a similar picture nationally, there were 175,233 children and young people with statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans and 112,057 children and young people with statements of special educational needs (SEN) maintained by local authorities as at January 2017. This gives a combined total of 287,290 children and young people, an increase of 30,975 (12.1%) from 256,315 as at January 2016. (Source: DfE May 017)
- 2.5 In order to address the demand and the growing expenditure in Rutland and to enhance the Council's and the Partnership's response to children with additional needs, a series of change management activities are taking place. The SEND and Inclusion service was integrated with the Early Intervention services in February 2017 and since then a great deal of activity is underway both within the service and with health commissioners, education providers and families, to review the provision for children with SEN and disabilities, (SEND). This includes a rewrite and an energetic engagement exercise on Rutland's Draft SEND and Inclusion Strategy, which sets out the vision for children with SEND and which is currently with stakeholders to review and contribute to.
- 2.6 There is a culture shift in the service and across the partnership and a change in operational practice to be more customer focused and that EHCPs are clearly articulating the education, health and social care outcomes for children and are preparing young people for adulthood. The service is reviewing its contracted services, such as the education psychology service and its independent advice service. It is undertaking an audit and quality assurance exercise of the Local Authority's commissioned provision, such as its 52 week residential and 38 week education placements for children with SEND and additional needs.
- 2.7 Key to the success of the Fair Access Protocol [its purpose being to ensure that, outside the normal admissions round, unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are found and offered a place quickly, so that the amount of time any child is out of school is kept to the minimum. Every local authority is required to have in place a Fair Access Protocol, developed in partnership with local schools], and the SEND Inclusion Strategy, will be securing the required range of specialist places within Rutland itself, or through utilising close geographical locations where specific provision is required, in addition to a greater focus on school autonomy and sector-driven improvement.
- 2.8 Work is underway with our schools and providers to support them in building their own capacity for the local leadership of SEND that should serve their schools well as the system matures. The programme of work with schools will ensure school

staff has skills, confidence and resilience to meet a greater range of pupil needs, particularly behavioural, social and emotional need, so that those children are retained within the sector and achieve well from their starting points. A roundtable event on the 11th May 2017 with key school's representatives and regional SEND advisors and a further whole school event on the 19th June 2017 have set in train actions to achieve the above.

- 2.9 In addition to this an engagement event took place with 90 parents and carers and with school SEN Co-ordinators (SENCOs) on the 23rd May 2017, to provide them with an update on the developments within the service and the 'Local Offer', as well as the opportunity to meet the team.
- 2.10 The information from all the events mentioned above has been fed into the service Self Evaluation Form (SEF) and the Action Plan that will deliver against the objectives in the SEND and Inclusion Strategy. Head teachers, health representatives and parents have expressed a commitment to forming a SEND Strategic Group to progress the wider transformation of SEND provision in Rutland and to securing the right set of skills and the appropriate provision so that more children are educated and enjoy a healthy family life, closer to home and at lower cost. The additional capital funding being made available to Local Authorities this year, described in Point 3.3 will support the transformation set out above.

3 ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 SEND and Inclusion services are subject to a Peer Review (July 2017) and an Ofsted and CQC area inspection.
- 3.2 More Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are being requested. Transition to EHCPs seems to have meant more expensive assessments, coupled with the improved identification of SEN is driving up demand. Schools are applying for funding through EHCPs because there is not adequate funding within budgets to fund additional needs.
- 3.3 SEND staffs including Education Psychology, (EP) services are challenged by the number of statements to EHCP conversions and annual reviews, to the extent that there is a backlog of assessments and case officers are not sufficiently involved in annual reviews. In Rutland there are 14 statutory assessments awaiting an EP assessment (7 transfers and 7 new EHC assessment requests) which will be cleared within 14 weeks, subject to further statutory requests coming in to the system during this period. There are a further 56 non-statutory EP requests outstanding, the length of time to clear this back log depends on the level of EP assessment required which can vary from 1 to 3 days. Increased capacity required within SEND casework due to additional workload from annual reviews, is being funded temporarily by the SEN Reform Grant, but it poses a potential long term funding issue.
- 3.4 In March 2017, the Minister for Vulnerable Children and Families, Edward Timpson, announced a £215m capital fund over three years for Local Authorities. Every local authority will be allocated at least £500,000 over three years from the fund, with more than half receiving at least £1 million. Councils will be free to invest the funding as they see fit to help children and young people with education, health and care plans to get a high quality education. It can be used in mainstream schools, including academies, free schools and grammar schools, special units, special schools, early years settings, further education colleges or other provision

for children and young people aged from 0-25. It could be used for example to build new specialised classrooms for children with emotional, social and mental health difficulties, expand existing classrooms to increase their size to improve access or to purchase mobility equipment.

- 3.5 Rutland County Council's allocation is £500,000 over 3 years and the Council will be expected to consult with local parents, carers, schools, and others on how their funding allocations should be used. The Council will have to publish a short plan showing how they will spend the funding and show how this fits in the wider context of strategic planning for SEND.
- 3.6 Currently the £500k funding for SEND is not ring fenced and would need Council approval. The service will seek approval to create a Project Brief and Project Group to progress the capital project as part of the SEND Transformation Plan and to consider if the proposed SEND Strategic Group described above could comprise a Project Group, together with personnel from both Resources and Places Directorates within agreed governance arrangements.
- 3.7 In addition to the above fund a report to Cabinet December 2016 (Report 219/2016) identified £200k capital as a contingency to support a proposal for increased SEN provision if a viable business case comes forward.

4 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The SEND and Inclusion Strategy articulates the direction and vision for an inclusive Rutland and sets out the key objectives to bring about transformation of services for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities
- 4.2 The service has completed a self-evaluation exercise with key stakeholders and has created an SEND Action Plan, (appended to the Strategy document) and a set of performance indicators that will set out action required, how success will be measured and timescale for completion.
- 4.3 The transformation exercise will ensure the Local Authority and its partners, specifically health and education providers are prepared for an Ofsted and CQC area inspection of SEND services and that Rutland can evidence its progress against the key Ofsted/CQC judgement areas which are; how it identifies, assesses and meets needs and achieves outcomes for children and young people with a special educational need or disability.

5 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 5.1 There are no additional papers

6 APPENDICES

Appendix A – (Draft) SEND and Inclusion Strategy

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.