



CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE 28 November 2017

Subject Heading:

High Needs Review and Strategy

SLT Lead:

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Policy context:

Council outcomes:

- Communities are resilient and self-supporting;
- A focus on prevention and early intervention to improve residents' wellbeing;
- Improved choice and control over the health and social care people receive;
- Access to 'early help offer' for children and young people most at risk;
- Services cost less to run and are more efficiently delivered; and
- Lower levels of preventable ill-health and people leading healthier lives.

Financial summary:

The review and strategy are being developed as part of the condition of additional capital funding from central government, amounting to approximately £800,000 p.a. over three years. This funding commences in financial year 2018/19, and can be used to improve existing provision or develop new provision for children and young people with high needs. As part of the review of high needs we are also looking at how we can maximise our use of revenue funding to improve provision generally, across the borough.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering
Places making Havering
Opportunities making Havering
Connections making Havering

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SUMMARY

Following the government's review of high needs funding and the consultation on the new national funding formula, we have undertaken a review of how our high needs budget is allocated. This has led to a re-drafted our High Needs Strategy.

The review commenced in light of the possibility of increased funding being made available through the new National Schools Funding Formula

The revised strategy sets out the proposals for the additional capital and allocated High Needs block funding budget from central government, as well as proposals to improve the processes and services we already deliver.

The intended outcomes are that:

- more children and young people can remain in-borough, in provision which supports them to achieve positive outcomes
- we have capacity across the spectrum of needs to provide high quality support
- we take a joined-up, invest to save approach across all partners including education, health and care.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The report is for Overview and Scrutiny to note progress and the direction of travel in the development of the strategy for children and young people with high needs.

REPORT DETAIL

Last year, the government announced proposals to consult on how funding is given to local authorities and schools to support children and young people with SEND, and those who need alternative provision. As part of this, local authorities are required to refresh their SEND Strategy to ensure that it is up to date and reflects current and predicted trends. The strategy should also provide clarity on how, and where, different levels of needs will be met and where the current and future gaps in provision are.

In refreshing our strategy, we have involved early years providers, schools, post-16 institutions, local authority and health staff, as well as children, young people and parents to ensure that the range and quality of provision reflects the needs and aspirations of children and young people in the area.

The refresh covers:

- Data on the range of SEND in the area
- Effectiveness of current provision
- The range of special educational needs which would generally be met by mainstream providers, specialist providers and highly specialised providers, including those such as residential special schools, non-maintained and independent special schools and special post-16 institutions
- How best to address any gaps and allocate resources.

In order to review how our high needs funding is allocated and develop the strategy, we consulted with:

- Parents and carers, via the Parents Forum (run by Positive Parents) and through a questionnaire on SurveyMonkey
- Children and young people, via Advocacy for All consultations on:
 - short breaks
 - personal outcomes evaluation tool (POET – which asks about young people's experiences of getting an EHCP)
 - preparing for adulthood
- Schools, including special schools via a focus group and a request to all schools to email any comments
- Post-16 providers via a focus group and a request to all providers to email any comments
- Early years providers via a focus group and a request to all providers to email any comments
- Local authority staff via two drop-in sessions and a request to email any comments
- Health colleagues at NELFT and the CCG

Emerging priorities for provision for SEND and those requiring alternative provision are:

- Establish a bursary scheme for early years' providers, schools and post-16 providers to adapt their environment to make their school/ provision more inclusive
- Increase the Inclusion Fund budget for early years
- Increase the hourly rate for top up payments to schools for pupils with EHC plans to £14. (Consequently this will reduce the number of hours that schools are expected to cover within the first £6,000 from 12 to 11.)
- Work closely with schools to reduce the number of exclusions, particularly amongst pupils with EHCPs, alongside monitoring the quality of alternative provision
- Allocate a small budget for pupils with high medical needs, but who do not have an EHCP
- Set a target of developing two new ARPs per year
- Develop the new free school for children and young people with complex ASD (autistic spectrum disorder) and SEMH (social, emotional and mental health difficulties). This will be for pupils aged from 3 – 16 years

- Review the designation of special schools, particularly in light of the new free school to ensure all special schools complement each other to meet the range of local need
- Re-draft the funding matrix for special schools to improve the appropriateness of funding levels linked to complexity of need
- Improve and increase the offer for pathways to adulthood and support young people and parents to be aspirational and realistic
- Ensure social care support complements the educational offer locally to support children and young people to meet their outcomes
- Work more closely with the CCG to align priorities and help children and young people to remain in borough, with the right support
- Invest in workforce training to ensure staff across all schools and settings (early years and post-16) feel confident in supporting children and young people with additional needs to achieve.

A draft strategy will be produced in November for further consultation with stakeholders. This will then be submitted for sign off to the SEND Executive Board, with final sign off by Executive Decision in December.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks: The financial risks are in the 'invest to save' approach. We have reviewed the budget and believe that for the first year (2018-19), the additional investment required (beyond that which is provided by central government) can be met by re-prioritising expenditure. For the second year, savings on out of borough expenditure will need to be made to balance the budget. We believe this will be possible for that year.

Legal implications and risks: No legal implications or risks are expected.

Human Resources implications and risks: None currently identified as this is an increase to budget

Equalities implications and risks: The review and strategy, as well as the funding from government, is to improve and increase provision for children and young people with high needs, who are a protected group.

The additional funding (from central government) will complement a more focussed approach on invest to save. This will ensure that the right support and services are provided at the right time in the right place, thereby reducing the number of children and young people who have to go out of borough for their education and learning.

For this reason it was agreed that an EA was not required.