

**RESILIENCE & INDEPENDENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND
DISABILITY (SEND) ENVIRONMENT (RAISE)**

To: **General Purposes Committee**

Meeting Date: **16 July 2019**

From: **Executive Director – People & Communities**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **Not applicable** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To consider a Transformation Fund bid to support Resilience and Independence in SEND Environment (RAISE).**

Recommendation: **The Committee is asked to approve the Transformation Bid proposal of £274k for RAISE.**

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contacts:</i>	
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cambridgeshire County Council supports provision for children and young people with specialist educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from their early years to age 25, and to support good quality Alternative Provision for pre-16 pupils who cannot receive education in schools.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 There are a range of legacy arrangements with AP (Alternative Provision) providers ranging from small numbers of spot placements for individual children and young people to those involving block purchases of places to which individual spot purchases of placements have been added, the number of the latter often exceeding the original block commitment. The lack of any review has meant that opportunities to maximise on our buying power or achieving economies of scale, exploiting commercial opportunities or introducing alternative commissioning/contracting models have been missed.

There are significant pressures on the SEN Placements Budget due to increased demand for specialist places, a lack of suitable local provision and the High Needs Block is already in deficit to an extent that a long term recovery plan will be required. Whilst this is being developed it is essential that every opportunity is taken to ensure that we are utilising budgets in the most effective way possible, maximising what we can deliver from within those budgets, whilst ensuring that we are continuing to enable young people to live as independently as possible and that their support is sustainable and as least restrictive as possible in their adult lives.

The work required has been formalised through the creation of the RAISE project which is being led by the SEND Service supported by the Children's Commissioning and Transformation Services.

This Transformation Fund bid is being made to fund the temporary resource which will be necessary to release expertise from these teams as well as some additional specialist commercial support.

- 2.2 The work will aim to achieve the following objectives:
- 2.2.1 To generate savings against current planned expenditure primarily in financial years 2019-20 and 2020-21.
 - 2.2.2 To raise provision resilience and budget resilience – new arrangements are likely to remain in place for 2-3 years.
 - 2.2.3 To raise the Council's ability to respond to and engage in a commercial market and maximises on the economic benefits of operating in a commercial environment.
- 2.3 The project will:
- review the needs of individual young people in placement

- review the commercial arrangements between the Authority and Providers
- test our provider market, its stability and its financial position
- provide a holistic, multidisciplinary approach to practice

2.4 Resourcing – the resource required will comprise:

- Interim commercial manager on temporary secondment from Adults Social Care;
- External interim commissioner specialising in achieving savings and improved terms from independent providers;
- An Assistant SEND Commissioner for day to day project management and for whom the role will be developmental (being mentored by the external experts)
- A SEND case worker assigned from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Send Service;
- The funding being sought will be used to directly recruit fund 'a' and 'b' and to fund the 'backfilling' of the internal secondments ('c & 'd') in order to ensure service continuity;
- The temporary resource will be required until December 2019.
- Personnel for 'a' and 'b' are already identified. For 'c' a candidate has been identified via a pre-arranged recruitment exercise and appointment is pending approval of funding. For 'd', an agency worker would be procured once funding is approved;
- This has been reviewed by the Chairman of Children and Young People Committee who is supportive of this proposal.

2.5 The discussions being held with providers with whom we have block placements will not lead to an increase in demand. For example, a current arrangement may involve a 20 place block with 40 places spot purchased – the aim of our negotiations is firstly to reverse this situation, setting up a new agreement for a 50 place block and up to 10 places on an as required basis (e.g. date of referral uncertain) and secondly to agree lower rates for all 60 places.

2.6 The project requires £274k of Transformation Funding for one financial year to resource the additional capacity for the team as detailed in the table below:

Recurring Cash Flow	19/20 £000	20/21 £000	21/22 £000	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	24/25 £000
Revenue Advance	274	-274	0	0	0	0
Capital Advance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saving / Income	-225	-725	-100			

Pay Back Period in Years	Year 2
Savings/Investment Ratio over 10 Years	1:4

Whilst most direct savings from this work will accrue to the High Needs Block within the Dedicated Schools Grant rather than the General Fund, the broader financial context for support to this transformation fund bid is as follows:

- The proposals will reduce the recurring deficit within the High Needs Block. The Council is due to submit a recovery plan to the Department for Education to address the deficit (£7.1m as at 31 March 2019): the RAISE project is one of the key management actions. Given the scale of the high needs block deficit there is potentially a risk to the general fund position: some local authorities have opted to utilise the general fund to meet the cost of deficits within the dedicated schools grant
- The additional capacity funded (commercial negotiation, commissioning, SEND casework and project management) are local authority functions and cannot be charged to the dedicated schools grant in any case
- There will be longer term and indirect benefits to the general fund: potentially reduced transport costs and lower costs of services for young adults leaving SEND services and entering Adult Social Care

2.7 Risks and Contingencies

Risk	Contingency
We may find it difficult to recruit to the team	We have good relationships with agencies and providers who are offering a range of well qualified staff
The recruited team members may leave during the project	As the project will work within existing teams, we will be able to provide consistent leadership and handover in the event of staff being replaced.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

The report above sets out the implication for this priority in paragraph 2.2

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

The report above sets out the implication for this priority in paragraph 2.2

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

Resource implication are identified in section 2.6.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Stephen Howarth
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Not applicable
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law?	Not applicable
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Not applicable
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Not applicable
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Not applicable
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Not applicable

Source Documents	Location
None	Not applicable