

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY COMMISSIONING STRATEGY

To: Children and Young People Committee

Meeting Date: 13 January 2015

From: Adrian Loades, Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: N/a **Key decision:** No

Purpose: The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) commissioning strategy plans for the current and future needs of children and young people with SEND to enable them to achieve good outcomes.

Recommendation: The Committee are asked to agree the strategy and the proposals to refocus our resources to give a greater emphasis on early intervention to reduce demand and high cost provision by:

- a) commissioning and delivering services that enhances the resilience and capacity of families and communities, including schools and other universal providers, to meet needs;
- b) targeting resources to ensure evidence based interventions are part of our early help and SEND specialist services offer to prevent needs escalating within the family, education setting, and/or community;
- c) increasing the robustness and clarity about the thresholds we use for determining the allocation of additional funding and resources for children and young people with SEND;
- d) ensuring children have the right placement allowing them to stay in their family and where this is not possible that a placement is close to their home and community;
- e) undertaking more detailed plans for delivering the overarching commissioning strategy that will come for approval to Children and Young People Committee in May 2015.

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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) commissioning strategy (**Appendix 1**) will provide the Local Authority with a strategic framework for how we address the increasing demand for SEND provision arising from population growth and current trends of increasing need. It also provides a framework of best practice ensuring we work to ensure a child stays in their family and community, accessing the services and support they require. Department for Education (DfE) data indicates that we have a higher percentage of pupils with an identified SEND than nationally and compared with similar authorities. The Strategy also sets out how we will improve educational outcomes for pupils identified with SEND which are poor when compared with national data and similar authorities.
- 1.2 Since the launch of the current SEND strategy in 2012 there have been some significant changes affecting the commissioning and delivery of SEND services. The national SEND reforms will have a significant impact on how services will be commissioned in the future and these are addressed through the strategy.
- 1.3 Through the new SEND reforms there are statutory protections for young adults up to the age of 25 in relation to supporting their preparation for adulthood and enabling them to access education, employment and training. There will be more young people aged 16-19 who will require a new Education, Health and Care Plan. This will require the Local Authority to undertake these assessments and the subsequent statutory annual reviews. This is an additional statutory responsibility for the SEND specialist services, Children's Social Care and Disability Team, the Adult Social Care Autism and Adult Support Team, the Adult Learning Disability Partnership, Physical Disability and Sensory Services, as well as for the Statutory Assessment and Resources team. Some additional capacity in the short term will be funded through a time limited DfE SEND reform grant which is available for next two years.
- 1.4 The new preparing for adulthood framework will determine the service delivery model for earlier preparation for adulthood across children's and adult's social care. It will support early identification of the personal care arrangements required to enable young people to participate in education, employment and training opportunities. This in the longer term will help young people develop greater independence, opportunities for work and leisure interests, and be supported to have greater choices. This should in the longer term reduce their reliance on adult social care packages.
- 1.5 The Local Authority will need to work with the universal providers, such as schools and settings, to strengthen their provision for early intervention, and their engagement with families and local communities as a resource to support the learning and achievements for children and young people with SEND. There is good research evidence that having robust systems in place to identify needs of those at significant risk and to target evidenced based interventions makes economic sense.¹
- 1.6 There will be greater expectations on universal services to provide services for those with SEND, and to make the necessary adaptations and access arrangements. The recently published Cambridgeshire SEND guidance will

¹ http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/media/9633017/stitch_in_time_web_a.pdf

make it clear to schools and settings the requirements of the new SEND Code of Practice (2014) detailing their responsibilities for making appropriate SEND provision. This will include their duties for undertaking their '*best endeavours*' to meet needs of those with SEND, as required by the Equality Act (2010). As part of the information required to decide whether the Local Authority should undertake a statutory Education, Health and Care assessment schools or educational setting will be expected to provide evidence of the interventions and arrangements they have put in place along with details of the impact on the child or young person. This will be crucial evidence on which to make robust decisions regarding whether to undertake a specialist SEND assessments, and before any additional resources are provided by the Local Authority.

- 1.7 The predicted schools age population growth is expected to increase by some 6% by January 2019 because of the impact of increased annual births and continued housing development in the county. Therefore, one would expect the number of children requiring placements in specialist provision to increase by a similar proportion. We may see a slight additional increase in some new communities due to an increased prevalence of children and young people with SEND based on current trends in Cambridgeshire. This will put additional financial pressure on the Direct Schools Budget and the funding retained by the Local Authority unless preventative action is undertaken. These issues are being discussed with the Schools' Forum in order to put forward future funding recommendations to address future demand.
- 1.8 In addition, to the overarching SEND commissioning strategy there will be more detailed commissioning plans in relation to SEND. These commissioning plans will be developed with service users, stakeholders, providers, and partners over the next three months. This will provide more detailed information on how needs will be met over the next five years, and projected spend required over the next 10 years across the spectrum of need, and will be ready by the end of April 2015, and circulated to the Committee for information.

2.0 MAIN ISSUES

2.1 THE SEND COMMISSIONING APPROACH

- 2.1.1 The focus of our commissioning approach will be for greater personalisation, improved integration and collaboration between services, and for service delivery to be as local as possible for the child and their family. This approach will require professionals to work differently, responding to need in a more flexible way so that children and young people and their families are a central part of designing the services they need. A collaborative team around the family approach will promote an integrated offer working together to address the needs and build on the strengths of the family. Fundamental to this way of working is '*Think Child, Think Parent, Think Family*'² methodology which underpins our Together for Families and Family Intervention Programmes. This approach will be a core part of the service delivery model for the SEND commissioning strategy.
- 2.1.2 Our commissioning intentions are based on a person-centred and strength based model with children, young people their families and carers at the centre. Their engagement, participation and co-production are essential in determining

² <http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/ataglance/ataglance09.asp>

what outcomes are important to them, and what support they need to help them achieve these outcomes. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) will bring together the information about the child and family to provide a shared understanding with the family about what outcomes they are seeking and what strengths and resources they have to support achieving these outcomes. This may include how they might draw on support from their community to meet the outcomes they want. The educational support from schools and other providers, including additional statutory services, will build on and enhance these arrangements. This approach will encourage greater participation of parents and carers and young people by exploring the range of resources they have available that can be used to self-direct their lives.

- 2.1.3 Our commissioning intentions will promote greater co-production with children and young people, their parents and carers. Co-production is about developing more equal partnerships between those who use services, carers and professionals. We are committed to involving the participation of service users in developing and shaping our 'Local Offer' of SEND services. The Local Offer will provide parents and carers a single point of access to information on the range of services, resources, how they can access support from statutory, community and voluntary providers as well as universal providers, such as early years and childcare, educational settings and Further Education colleges.
- 2.1.4 Our commissioning will require joint commitments from health, social care, educational settings and the voluntary and community sector to have a shared approach. We must provide a coherent offer that strengthens family's and community's abilities to address the outcomes sought for the child or young person. This shared and integrated approach not only supports better outcomes for young people, it values the contribution of the family, and is also much more cost effective.
- 2.1.5 Our joint commissioning arrangements need to deliver services as local to the child's home as possible, with fewer families needing to travel long distances to access specialist education, health and or care provision. We will need a joint commitment with our statutory partners to reduce expenditure for high cost provision, particularly placements outside Cambridgeshire, so as to ensure local delivery of services is sustainable.
- 2.1.6 The SEND Commissioning strategy will align with the strategic directions identified in other related strategies, these include:
- Accelerating Achievement for Vulnerable Groups
 - Early Help strategy
 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health strategy
 - Adult Social Care, Transforming Lives Strategy
 - Adult Social Care, Physical Disability and Sensory Services Commissioning Strategy 2014-2018
- 2.1.7 We will continue to commission a range of services to support children and young people to succeed in their local school or educational setting. The SEND specialist services will provide additional support and guidance for schools and families on interventions that will have a positive impact on children's learning, participation, and independence. There will be more detailed commissioning plans in relation to the Local Authority's offer in relation to the main areas of

SEND. These commissioning plans will be developed with service users, stakeholders, providers, and partners over the next three months. This will provide more detailed information on how needs will be met over the next five years, and projected spend required over the next 10 years across the spectrum of need, and will be ready by the end of April 2015, and circulated to the Committee for information.

- 2.1.8 There will be more detailed commissioning plans to inform the Local Authority's offer in relation to the main areas of SEND. These commissioning plans will be developed with service users, stakeholders, providers, and partners over the next three months. This will provide more detailed information on how needs will be met over the next five years, and projected spend required over the next 10 years across the spectrum of need, and will be ready by the end of April 2015, and circulated to the Committee for information.

3.0 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

- 3.1.1 There are implications for developing appropriate provision for young adults with learning difficulties and disabilities that will focus on preparation for work. As part of the 'Local Offer' the Local Authority will be expected to work with partners, including post-16 educational providers, on details of arrangements to engage employers to provide apprenticeships, internships and supported employment for young adults with disabilities. The Preparation for Adulthood Project board has been reviewing the arrangements between children and adult social care to improve choice for disabled young people by earlier identification of the support packages available as they approach the age of 18.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

- 3.2.1 The SEND Commissioning strategy is focused on delivering the outcomes that are important to children and young people with SEND and their families, these include:
- Being happy, confident and healthy
 - Having friends and a peer group
 - Doing well at school
 - Having a job and able to pursue interests
 - Being able to be as independent as possible, and supported to make choices
 - Being safe
- 3.2.2 The measures of success will identify evidence that will inform us that these outcomes are realised.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

- 3.3.1 The SEND commissioning strategy's purpose is to ensure that the right services are delivered at the right time to support better outcomes for children, young people and young adults with SEND. These groups include some of Cambridgeshire's most vulnerable young people. The commissioning approach is strengths-based, building the resilience of these young people so that they can use the resources they have to self-direct their lives.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

- 4.1.1 The SEND commissioning approach seeks to refocus the resources towards more robust early intervention through local services working with families and schools. This requires a commitment to redirect savings by reduced placements in specialist provision, especially in non-maintained or independent specialist provision back into mainstream or more local special provision ensuring that children can remain with their families.
- 4.1.2 We know that there is increased pressure on the top-up element of the High Needs Block that funds Statements of SEN or the new Education and Health Care (EHC) plans. We need to build confidence in the earlier stage of identifying and meeting need prior to the statutory assessment and plan process. This requires the Local Authority to commit to review the spend on 'top up' for mainstream pupils with EHC plans, with the aim of redirecting resources back in the longer term to schools through the Direct Schools Budget.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

- 4.2.1 The SEND commissioning strategy will help us to meet our new statutory duties outlined in the Children and Families Act (2014) and the new Care Act (2014), and our statutory duties in line with the new SEN Code of Practice (2014).

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 4.3.1 The SEND Commissioning strategy emphasises the legal framework of the new SEND Code of Practice (2014) and the Equalities Act (2010) that requires all providers to meet the Equality Act duties for disabled children and young people and use their 'best endeavours' to meet their needs. A Community (Equality) Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached (**Appendix 2**).

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

- 4.4.1 The draft SEND Commissioning Strategy has been shared with wide range of partners, including schools and head teacher groups, staff across Children and Families and Adults, and council members from the Children's and Young People's committee. Feedback has been sought through focus groups, meetings with stakeholders and from written feedback. This feedback has informed the current SEND Commissioning Strategy and has been an iterative process over a 12 month period.
- 4.4.2 All parents and carers on the contact lists for Parent Partnership Service and Pinpoint were invited to feedback their views on the Draft SEND Commissioning Strategy through a survey questionnaire. The analysis of the results from 55 respondents showed:
- 98% agreed or strongly agreed with the outcomes as being important for your child now or in the future
 - 78% agreed with commissioning approach to planning services will improve the services you and your child will receive
 - 74% agreed with the three main commissioning aims

- 45% agreed that the actions identified were clear enough
- 62% agreed that the success measure identified were most appropriate

4.5 Public Health Implications

4.5.1 The aim of the 2013 Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)³ is to identify the current and future health and wellbeing needs of people with a physical, learning or sensory disability. The key findings in the JSNA are:

- The transition between children's and adult social care and health services is one of the most difficult experiences for young people and their families
- Poor transition processes are associated with poor health and social care outcomes
- The number of children with disabilities is predicted to increase, predominantly because of demographic change
- Poorer outcomes associated with children with SEND in Cambridgeshire found at all stages of schooling; more likely to be NEET (not in employment, education or training); three times more likely to be recipients of free-school meals; and are more vulnerable to abuse

4.5.2 Through the SEND commissioning strategy we need to address these findings and ensure points of transitions between services are made as clear and joined up as possible. The health outcomes proposed by the Public Health outcomes framework have been incorporated into this strategy as they relate to young people with SEND.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

4.6.1 The Commissioning approach empowers families to seek the support they need by accessing community based resources. They will be encouraged to engage more with community developments so that they can access local services. We have an expectation that universal and targeted services delivered by communities should be accessible for children and young people with SEND and their families. We need to support this to happen.

Source Documents	Location
Cambridgeshire Children, Families and Adults Services - Our strategic commissioning approach for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (Appendix 1 – attached)	Room 226, Shire Hall, Cambridge .
Community Impact Assessment : SEND Commissioning Strategy (Appendix 2)	Room 226, Shire Hall, Cambridge

³ <http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/joint-strategic-needs-assessment/current-jsna-reports/physical-disabilities-and-learning>