

DEMAND MANAGEMENT IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY SYSTEM

To: Children and Young People's Committee

Meeting Date: 21st January 2020

From: Executive Director, People and Communities

Electoral division(s): All

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

Purpose: To agree a transformation fund draw down to fund a specialist resource to work with officers in the Special Educational Needs and Disability system (SEND) to skill them up to change conversations and adopt a strengths based model (similar to the Adult Positive Challenge Programme and Family Safeguarding) with schools and families. The aim being to reduce demand for specialist high cost services.

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the current deficit position within the High Needs Block;
- b) Recommend to the General Purposes Committee that up to £130k of transformation funds are released to provide additional resources to support staff in new ways of working.

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contacts:</i>	
Name:	Jonathan Lewis	Names:	Councillor Simon Bywater
Post:	Director of Education	Post:	Chair of Children and Young People's Committee
Email:	Jonathan.Lewis@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	Simon.Bywater@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	01223 727994	Tel:	01487 831079

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Local Government Association has highlighted that the funding deficit that councils are facing in providing special education needs and disability (SEND) services could grow nationally to more than £800 million in 2019/2020.
- 1.2 By the end of November 2019, the forecast in-year pressure on the High Needs Block in Cambridgeshire had risen to £9 million and numbers of education, health and care plans (EHCPs) are continuing to rise. When added to the deficit carried forward from 2018/19 this results in a forecast cumulative Dedicated Schools Grant deficit of more than £16 million at the end of 2019/20.
- 1.3 The increased need and pressure on demand led services in Cambridgeshire is reflected in the rise of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The number of EHCPs maintained on census day (third Thursday in January 2019) increased by 9% year on year which has been one of the main contributing factors to the financial position outlined in 1.2. The increased demand and complexity of need has also had a knock-on impact on council revenue funded budgets such as Home to School Transport and Education Psychology.
- 1.4 The entire population of Cambridgeshire is anticipated to increase by approximately 29,000 people between 2017 and 2026. The current number of children with EHCPs is 4,600. If the proportion of children and young people with EHCPs and SEND support remains roughly steady that will mean an additional 260 children with EHCPs and an additional 860 children requiring SEND support entering the system. In addition to this, complexity of need is also increasing among children and young people meaning that it is costing more on average to meet each child/young person's needs. This, coupled with the low funding given to Cambridgeshire by central government (the Cambridgeshire baseline for primary and secondary schools in 2019/2020 was £4,349 compared to a national average of £4,689, a difference of £340 per pupil) has created a pressure and overspend for the county.
- 1.5 Cambridgeshire has consistently seen a higher rate of EHCPs issued than national and similar authority averages. In 2018 Cambridgeshire had an EHCP rate of 18.9 per 1,000 of the eligible population compared to a rate of 17.8 amongst our statistical neighbours and a rate in England of 18.3.
- 1.6 CCC has been responding to these growing pressures through a variety of measures and in June 2019 submitted a Recovery Plan to the Department for Education. The Recovery Plan outlines a number of options that have been identified and discussed with the Schools Forum and aims to reduce the levels of High Needs spend in the coming years. All of the actions are still subject to consultation and final approval.
- 1.7 In addition it has been identified that there is a disproportionate number of EHCP's in the more affluent parts of the county; this is contrary to what our needs analysis tells us, for example we should have more in the north than the south. The hypothesis is that schools/parents/carers in the south advocate more strongly for EHCP's than those in the north and this results in plans sometimes being agreed when other interventions and support could adequately meet need at a lower cost. With this in mind we want to upskill officers in the SEND system to be able to confidently have a different conversation with schools/parents/carers that results in increased community support as opposed to the high level of specialist support being provided to children with SEND.

- 1.8 The Adults Positive Challenge Programme (APCP) which has been in delivery since spring 2018 has taken this approach to delivering significant, and sustained, change in Adult Services. The outcomes from the programme to date show us that strengths based model can lead to people and teams working in different ways and positively responding to pressures in the system. Examples of where the APCP has had a positive impact include:
- Independence focus to Adults Social Care (ASC) website, leading to a reduction in contact pressures to the service and more appropriate referrals
 - Technology Enabled Care (TEC) solutions being considered by staff as part of client conversations – supporting greater independence and less intensive service interventions
 - Staff are empowered to have strengths based conversations with clients, supporting more flexible support and more independence focused outcomes

2. PROPOSAL TO DELIVER FURTHER CHANGE

- 2.1. We are requesting a drawdown of up to £130k from the Transformation Fund for specialist capacity. Market research indicates that this level of investment would provide the input required to deliver this work.

The skills needed from the specialist capacity are subject matter expertise in SEND, quantitative analysis and an understanding of both the theory and application of the assessment and the implementation of behavioural science techniques.

The specialist capacity would work alongside the service, the transformation team and business intelligence to:

- Enable CCC to test out hypotheses into what is driving demand and have a robust, evidence led analysis of demand drivers and subsequent demand flows and impacts in the system
 - Identify, develop and test opportunities for different ways of working to positively influence demand
 - Develop recommendations and opportunities for CCC to effectively and sustainably respond to demand and system pressures over the longer term
- 2.2 An initial scoping document has identified three pieces of work, which will identify the financial opportunity, delivery approach, and build confidence in the demand management approach for the SEND High Needs recovery programme. The detail of each workstream is set out in section 2.3:
- Analyse Demand: using qualitative and quantitative analysis, understand the amount of demand that can be positively influenced and identify opportunities to do this.
 - Design Opportunities: based on the findings from the analysis of demand, this work will focus on developing a range of opportunities to manage demand. The focus will be on applying behavioural science tools and techniques with staff in CCC and partners to positively influence demand throughout the system.

- Deliver and Test Opportunities: Where there are opportunities, short and focused initiatives will be delivered to deliver quick wins, demonstrate impact and build confidence in the demand management approach.

2.3 Preliminary research has identified outcomes and deliverables for each of the three key components of the work.

2.3.1 Analyse Demand

Through benchmarking with other authorities, case reviews, surveys and panel observations CCC could gain:

- An understanding of how CCC compares to other authorities
- An understanding of where specialist support could have been reduced, delayed or avoided, and the early intervention support required to do so
- An understanding of what is driving demand as well as a range of interventions/ approaches that could have influenced level of need
- The identification of opportunities to influence demand and reduce demand on specialist provision
- Agreement with staff, parents and partners on opportunities for change

2.3.2 Design Opportunities

From using the findings of the demand analysis to develop opportunities, CCC could gain:

- An understanding of the benefits that could be realised for each opportunity
- Prioritised opportunities that will deliver the highest level of immediate impact
- Delivery plans with identified resources and evaluation measures ready to be implemented and deployed

2.3.3 Deliver and Test Opportunities

Dependent on the findings of the demand analysis and the opportunities developed, opportunities to be delivered and tested could include:

- Introducing a changing the conversation workforce development approach (behavioural science led framework) by delivering workshops on strengths based practice and behavioural science techniques with specific CCC and partner staff. This will develop strengths based practice at key interaction points across a family and child's journey, building positive relationships and identifying appropriate support and independence focused outcomes for children and young people
- Reviews of higher cost placements, using strength-based conversations (as above) and a tool to codify needs, to ensure provision is appropriately matched to needs and consider where changes to existing placements and support could better meet outcomes at lower cost. This will link closely with the RAISE project already underway
- Using behavioural science techniques to design and trial changes to decision-making processes around EHCP requests, approvals and plans and panel processes. This will ensure these are robust and transparent to parents/carers and professionals, contain appropriate needs based and outcomes focused challenge prompted through chair and

attendee prompts, and that plans are the best way forward to appropriately meet a child or young person's needs

The overall outcome is to deliver and demonstrate positive impact on the DSG deficit through reduced demand and cost, highlight the positive outcomes delivered, and build confidence in the demand management approach, however other outcomes could include:

- Revisions to the website and communication materials to develop a clear offer that is accessible to parents/carers and professionals, encouraging self-serve information and advice, positive behaviours and appropriately set expectations
- Increased robustness and transparency of decision making to ensure EHCP plans and support is appropriate to achieve better outcomes for children with SEND
- Through effective workforce development, empowered schools and professionals working with children with SEND which enhances support in mainstream settings and supports families to intervene effectively at home
- Improved use of resources and quality of support provided

2.4 It is anticipated that opportunities are implemented within 12 weeks of the work commencing, with measurable impact (such as identifiable shifts in demand and staff behaviours) being identified after 16 weeks.

2.5 The evaluation measures used will depend on the opportunities identified and initiatives delivered but could include a combination of:

<u>Outcome</u>	<u>System Impact</u>
Families and children feel empowered to access the information and support they need, without having to rely on professional support	Increased number of children and families receiving preventative support earlier on
Decision-making is more robust – ensuring needs match with the provision in order to deliver clear outcomes	Support more clearly aligned to needs and outcomes
Stronger relationships between professionals and family who work together to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people	Cost avoidance as a result of interventions which will prevent cost / additional spend
Parents and professionals are able to put the right support in place for children and young people with SEND that prevents need escalation	Reduced numbers and rates of exclusions and use of Alternative Provision
Parents and carers have increased trust in mainstream support	Reduced amount of demand for specialist support

2.6 This initial work will inform the longer-term demand management approach and resource requirement (if any) within the SEND Recovery Programme. The work set out in this paper

will provide the route to delivery and give confidence in the impact of a demand-led approach. There are close links with the Preparing for Adulthood workstream which is part of APCP, in which Changing the Conversation training has already taken place.

3. ENABLERS AND INVESTMENT

We are requesting a transformation fund investment of £130k to undertake this work. The majority of savings will be made on the Dedicated Schools Grant.

4. RISK AND CONTINGENCIES

Risk	Contingency
There is insufficient data within the service to effectively analyse demand and identify opportunities	Business Intelligence led work streams within the SEND Recovery Plan (Performance Management, SEND Sufficiency Review and Data Management) are focused on providing accurate data to inform decisions and forecasting pupil numbers.
The savings identified do not offer significant improvements or substantial savings	Officers will work with the independent consultant to ensure that they have sight of all the information and data so that all opportunities for savings have been explored. Officers will look to embed a break clause in any contract issued if the return on investment does not represent value for money.
Knowledge and expertise around behavioural science remains with the consultants and is not passed down to CCC	Consultant training session with officers to provide the necessary toolkit/terminology Visits to children's high needs sites and to other comparable authorities Co-delivery wherever possible accompanied by feedback and coaching

5. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1. A good quality of life for everyone

We are committed to providing high quality, sustainable local provision and services to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.

5.2 Thriving places for people to live

There are no significant implications for this priority.

5.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

We are committed to promoting the early identification of children and young people's needs and early intervention to support them.

We are committed to providing choice and control for children and young people and

Parents/carers wherever possible.

We are committed to working closely with health and other local authority colleagues to deliver the Best Start in Life strategy.

6. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Resource Implications

There will be a requirement for up to £130k of transformation funding in support of this project.

6.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

No significant implications have been identified at this stage. When the plan is formalised an Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out. Given the client group affected, it is foreseeable that the EIA may identify some impacts where mitigating efforts are required.

6.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category. There is the need to link with the Best Start in Life strategy and other evolving work to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Tom Kelly
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Gus de Silva
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Jennifer Bartlett
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Joanne Dickson
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Jonathan Lewis
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?	Yes Name of Officer: Tess Campbell