

RBK Health & Wellbeing Board

28 March 2019

SEND Transformation Plan

Annex 3, Changes to the RBK SEND Transformation Plan, Nov 2018 to March 2019

Report by Interim Director of Children's Services

Introduction:

The Draft SEND Transformation Plan was published as a paper for the Children's and Adults' Care and Education Committee on 22 November 2018. The SEND Transformation Plan published with the papers for the Health and Wellbeing Board on 28 March includes a number of differences to the draft version. These differences include changes to the financial position (e.g. forecast versus actual), and changes to the wider contents of the plan including to reflect the findings of the consultation process. More detail on these two areas are provided below. Importantly the SEND Transformation Plan will be regularly reviewed at the SEND Partnership Board, and updates published on an iterative basis.

1. Financial update:

- 1.1. Actual expenditure over the past four months has been less than forecast, and forecast expenditure is also now lower than before.
- 1.2. The average cost of an EHCP has reduced during the 2018/9 financial year and this is reflected in future forecasts.
- 1.3. The forecast growth in the total number of EHCPs has been reduced from 100 per year for the next three years to an additional 100, 90 and 80.
- 1.4. The final DSG settlement (income) for 2018/9 is now higher than anticipated in the autumn. Part of this reflects Kingston's share (£417k) of the extra £125m revenue funding for each of 2018/9 and 2019/20 that government announced in December 2018 across all local authorities. This additional funding is assumed to continue in 2020/21 and beyond.
- 1.5. 2018/9 underspends in the Schools and Early Years Blocks have been reflected
- 1.6. Previous proposals relating to the movement of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block have been updated.
- 1.7. Savings relating to the Assessment and Planning Workstream have been reduced.

2. Responses to key headlines of consultation findings / updates:

- 2.1. *"Support for children and young people with special educational needs is a statutory duty and must be funded. Rather than cutting services the Council should lobby central government for adequate funding and find resources from elsewhere in the Council's budget/ assets"*

Kingston continues to lobby government for an increase in financial support relating to SEND. This is directly through bilateral meetings with senior Education Ministers and Department of Education Officers, via representative organisations such as London Councils and the Local Government Association, and through joint communications with neighbouring boroughs and their MPs.

On 12 November 2018 the Education and Skills Funding Agency wrote to local authorities regarding a consultation on the implementation of new arrangements for

reporting deficits in the Dedicated Schools Grant. The document included the following sentences:

“DSG is a ring-fenced specific grant, provided outside the local government finance settlement. It must be used in support of the schools budget for the purposes defined in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. As funding is ring-fenced, there is no requirement for local authorities to top-up the grant from general funding or from non-ring-fenced revenue reserves.”

In addition to this clear directive, like a growing number of other local authorities, Kingston does not have sufficient spare capacity in its wider budgets to permanently “top up” funding for a sector that is central government’s undisputed responsibility to adequately resource.

- 2.2. *“More local provision is welcomed, but must be high quality. Comparable provision must be established before reductions in out of borough/independent placements are implemented”*

Proposals to increase the number of local specialist places are as shown in the table below. A process for benchmarking the new provisions against outstanding providers and popular independent provision has been included in the Plan.

Venue	Specialism	Extra places
Specialist Resource Provisions		
Surbiton Children’s Centre Nursery School	Social communication needs including autism and moderate and severe learning difficulties	6
Castle Hill Primary School	Speech language and communication needs and learning difficulties	16
King Athelstan Primary School	Social, emotional and mental health	6
Latchmere School	Social communication needs including autism and mild to moderate learning difficulties	6
Coombe Girls’ School	Communication needs, including hearing impairment	30
Hollyfield School and Sixth Form Centre	Social communication needs including autism, mild to moderate learning difficulties and sensory and emotional health needs	20
Tolworth Girls’	Emotional health (including girls with autism)	10
Special Schools		
Dysart School	Severe and complex learning disabilities	29
St Philip’s	Moderate learning difficulties	40
New Free School	Autistic spectrum disorder	90
Total		253

- 2.3. *“Early intervention is recognised as impactful but to be successful it must be adequately resourced, and it cannot and must not replace statutory support”*

The requirement to continue to provide statutory support is understood and acknowledged. The Council has agreed to provide £280k of funding in 2019/20 to support additional and improved early identification and intervention.

- 2.4. *“Annual reviews of EHCPs are important and must be focussed on children and young people’s needs, not driven by a target to reduce provision”*

It is expected that the additional resources being allocated to annual reviews will result in a higher quality review process with more bespoke support and interventions that are more tailored to the evolving needs of the child or young person. Improved measurement of the impact of provision on the progress achieved will also allow the performance of providers to be more closely monitored. Improved annual reviews will also help better plan transitions and highlight placement challenges. Additional text about this process has been added to the Plan.

- 2.5. *“EHCP Coordinators / SEN Caseworkers need training and support to produce quality documentation and support parents to navigate the process; better retention would be helpful in building relationships”*

A significant programme of training for EHCP Coordinators / SEN Caseworkers is underway and this will continue throughout the summer term and beyond. The programme is based on a full self evaluation of the skills of the SEND Team undertaken in January. The need to improve staff skills is believed to be wider than just the SEND team, and for example spans the health and school workforce. At the first meeting of the SEND Partnership Board it was agreed to develop a pan system workforce strategy and a group is being formed to take this forward.

- 2.6. *“Achieving for Children and Kingston Council need to regain the trust and confidence of some parents of children and young people with special educational needs”*

In addition to the process of establishing a new Parent Carer Forum being managed by Contact (the voluntary sector organisation commissioned by the Department for Education for this purpose), the Director of Children’s Services is leading on the establishment of a Parent Consortium in Kingston.

- 2.7. *“Children and young people want teachers and professionals to be honest, supportive and work together”*

See 2.8

- 2.8. *“Children and young people want their individual needs and learning styles to be understood and responded to, including appropriate learning environments; a wide range of interesting and fun lessons and leisure Opportunities”*

Achieving for Children is continuing to work with schools and other delivery partners to publicise the findings of the consultation process and improve practice to reflect this. The use of established networks (e.g. Headteachers, School Improvement and SENCO Forums) and conferences such as the SENCO (Feb), Early Years (May) and SEND Futures (June) conferences will support this. AfC’s Participation Officer for Children and Young People with SEND is working with children and young people to respond to the information collected in the consultation and will produce a “You said, we did” summary in the summer term.

2.9. *“Young people want support post 16, work experience and support to prepare for adulthood”.*

Improvements to the post 16 vocational pathways continue to be made. Examples include:

- this year’s World of Work Roadshow, held on 6 March and attended by over 1000 young people from Kingston and Richmond, included a bespoke SEND session for the first time, and
- the Council has agreed to two supported apprenticeships to start in 2019