

## **SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES SERVICES (SpLD)**

### *Report of the Director of Children's Services*

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#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To seek Forum's agreement to the recommendations of the SEND Executive for the future funding of SpLD high level needs services in Hertfordshire.

#### **2. Summary**

- 2.1 An update on the SpLD workstream was presented to Forum on 21 September 2016. This asked Forum to note and comment on the work underway.
- 2.2 Forum noted that the SpLD Outreach service offer was being shaped and the impact on the future budget would be outlined by December 2016.

#### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 Forum is asked to endorse the recommendation in paragraph 5.7 below that the re-shaped high level need SpLD services be funded in line with Model 4. This proposes a reduced funding envelope of £728,000 in a full year which will provide for 10.7 staff, a professional SpLD lead and administrative costs. This funding will include accredited training for schools and the re-developed SpLD services will be focussed at Tier 2 (targeted services) and Tier 3 (specialist services). If agreed this will result in approximately £950k savings in a full year in a full year when implemented.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 The report to Forum of 21 September 2016 set out the objectives and progress of the SpLD workstream including:

- The decommissioning of the secondary base provision;
- The interim service specification for Primary SpLD bases;
- The allocation of the accredited training budget;
- The re-modelling of services to ensure greater consistency and equity;
- The development of a more appropriate model and level of funding to provide support for high level SpLD needs.

## **5. Options for future SpLD Provision**

5.1 A number of different options have been considered for meeting the needs of children and young people with high level SpLD in Hertfordshire.

5.2 The SpLD review (August 2015) found:

- ‘the review did not evidence that SpLD services are primarily focused on high level needs’ and ‘there was no strong case made for necessarily continuing to fund such services from the High Needs Block’;
- The number of pupils with a statement (or Education, Health and Care Plan) with SpLD as a main presenting need was 84 (May 2015) out of a total of over 4000;
- Any future SpLD services should be aligned with other outreach/support services locally.
- Future arrangements should be responsive to local priorities and commissioning could be devolved to local DSPL areas based on an equitable share of resources.

5.3 The options for future provision are to:

- Continue with the existing service in its current form and with the current financial resource;
- Develop a similar ‘base’ model to the current one but with a reduced financial envelope;
- Develop a hub/advisory service model also with a reduced financial envelope;
- De-commission the service and meet the needs in another way.

5.4 The SpLD working group has, in a similar way to other workstreams, described a tiered approach to meet the needs of children and young people:

- Tier 1: Universal Support and Quality First Teaching;
- Tier 2: Targeted Advice and Support;
- Tier 3: Specialist Support.

This approach defines the offer for SpLD including the expectations on schools and the focus of targeted and specialist high level needs services. It is expected that very few children and young people with SpLD will require specialist support at Tier 3.

5.5 An SpLD paper was presented to the SEND Executive on 16 November 2016.

(i) The working group recommended the allocation of funding across the three tiers in the following proportions:

Tier 1: Universal – 10%

Tier 2: Targeted – 70%

Tier 3: Specialist – 20%

The working group preference was for continuing a Base model rather than a Hub/Advisory service model.

(ii) The workstream put forward two options for the SEND Executive:

- A 5 or 9 base model with 17 teachers and a professional lead (approximately 65% of current funding);
- A 5 or 9 base model with 13 teachers and a professional lead (approximately 50% of current funding).

5.6 The SEND Executive did not consider the recommendations of the workstream to be justified on the basis of the findings of the original review. In coming to its decision, the SEND Executive took the following considerations into account:

- Any resource should not provide for Tier 1 universal provision (provision all schools make for children and young people with SEND and SpLD);
- Any high needs service should be proportionate to other services provided. For example, the Communication and Autism service has 12 advisory teachers across the County;
- A targeted service focusing on children and young people with more complex needs is essential;
- The funding for accredited training forms part of the overall provision and resource available;
- A funding decision needs to be made to enable the work to move forward.

5.7 The SEND Executive took a vote to agree on a funding envelope of 65% (0 votes); 50% (1 vote) or less than 50% (9 votes).

Further modelling has since taken place and a recommendation for Model 4 below is made based on the views above:

Model	Funding	% Current Budget	Accredited Training	Total Funding	Provision
1	£1,027,180	63%		£1,027,180	5/9 base model: 17 staff, professional lead & admin
2	£795,740	50%		£795,740	5/9 base model: 13 staff, professional lead & admin
3	£566,180	35%	£58,000	£624,180	Minimum sustainable model: 9 staff, professional lead, admin & accredited training costs
4	£670,000	41.5%	£58,000	£728,000	50% model with tier 1 removed, accredited training, 10.7 staff, professional lead & admin
5	£728,000	48.5%	£58,000	£786,000	50% model with tier 1 removed, accredited training, 11.7 staff, professional lead & admin

## 6. Conclusion

Forum is asked to endorse the recommendation for Model 4 above so that work can move forward to redevelop the SpLD services funded from High Needs DSG. If Model 4 is progressed it will result in approximately £950k savings in a full year when implemented. This is recommended to provide a more targeted, cost effective model that supports the needs of primary and secondary pupils with more challenging levels of SpLD and builds on the universal support that all schools provide.