

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 20 May 2019

Report Title

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), Sufficiency and increase in educational provision - Phase 2

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jon Stonehouse, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

Report Author(s)

Mary Jarrett, Head of Inclusion - Performance, Commissioning and Inclusion.
Dean Fenton, Head of Service - School Planning, Admissions and Appeals, Education.

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report contains the proposed second phase of the Council's plans to increase and develop special education needs provision in Rotherham and outlines the available capital budget allocated by central government to enable these developments to be implemented.

The report recommends that the Council consults with providers in relation to new provision to meet the needs identified within the sufficiency strategy.

Recommendations

1. That approval be given to the publication of the refreshed Special Education Needs Strategy (2019) as part of the Borough's Local Offer for Children with SEND.
2. That approval be given to a period of consultation with schools and settings in relation to the additional capacity required in borough and seek proposals to increase educational provision for Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) across the Borough.

3. That a further report be submitted following consultation with schools and settings, seeking approval of the proposals recommended for implementation and the associated allocation of capital investment to support the proposals.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2019 refresh.
- Appendix 2 Implementation table for Phase 1 (2017-2020)
- Appendix 3 Equalities Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Yes

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), Sufficiency and increase in educational provision - Phase 2

1. Background

- 1.1 Phase 1 of the Rotherham SEND sufficiency planning began in 2017. A report was approved by Cabinet on 16th October 2017 to begin a period of consultation on proposals to increase SEND capacity of provision across the Borough by 125 places by 2021. On 19th February 2018 following consultation, Cabinet approved proposals to complete phase 1 of SE which will create 125 additional permanent Special Educational Needs places for children with SEN between 2018 and 2021. Appendix 2, to this report shows the progress made to date.
- 1.2 The sufficiency data was refreshed in October 2018 and like other Local Authorities in England this showed that Rotherham continues to see a rise in the numbers of children and young people with SEND and that this growth is likely to continue.
- 1.3 The Council want children and young people with SEND to learn in Rotherham at good or outstanding schools. This can be delivered either by specialist resource units based within local schools or by special schools.
- 1.4 Mainstream schools will receive support from a range of inclusion services and from receiving specialist targeted support delivered by primary and secondary outreach teams specialising in Social Emotional and Mental Health and supporting children and young people with autistic spectrum conditions.
- 1.5 This work will include post-16 provision to ensure that pathways are in place to prepare young people for adulthood including independence, employment opportunities and Further and Higher Education provision.
- 1.6 In recognition of the national rise in numbers of children with SEND, the Department for Education (DfE) announced that there would be additional funding made available. In May 2018 the government announced national funding of £50m and later in December 2018 a further £100m for capital investment for school places for children and young people with SEND. In Rotherham this funding amounts to an additional £348k allocated from DfE's – Special Provision Capital Fund.
- 1.7 Increasing SEND school places in Rotherham will reduce the need for children to travel longer distances to school. The number of pupils currently placed outside the Local Authority is approximately 189. The population data suggests that this will continue to grow unless there is on-going investment to develop new provision in Rotherham.
- 1.8 The Dedicated Schools Grant (High Needs Budget) is significantly overspent and the Council are currently developing a recovery plan to address this. Indications are that there will continue to be significant increases in out of authority placements should local capacity not be increased. This will lead to further pressure on high needs funding as 'out of authority' placements are significantly more expensive than 'in authority' placements.

- 1.9 The SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2017-19 (Phase 1) has resulted in the development of an additional 125 new places within Special Schools and Inclusion Units. These developments will be finalised by September 2020 and whilst some places have been used during 2018 the majority will be accessed during the academic year 2019-2020 (see Appendix 2) and should begin to reduce the numbers of children and young people being placed in out of authority placements.
- 1.10 The SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2019 Phase 2 (Appendix 1) outlines the population data and projected growth over the next 10 years. The data demonstrates a significant increase in the number of children and young people with autism, moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and mental health difficulties who will require additional support.
- 1.11 Therefore the SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2019 Phase 2 (Appendix 1) specifically proposes developing the use of SEND Inclusion Units within mainstream school settings to ensure that vulnerable pupils can access a mainstream curriculum but also receive high quality support, care and preparation for adulthood alongside this curriculum.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The increase in SEND provision within the Authority is necessary due to the increased pupil population since 2010 as outlined in the needs analysis contained within the appended SEND Sufficiency Strategy. (Appendix 1)
- 2.2 The SEND Sufficiency Strategy sets out Rotherham's strategic intentions which are:
- 2.2.1 For Academies and Local maintained schools to receive high quality support to enable them to become as inclusive and resilient as possible; so that children receive a high quality education which differentiates learning and teaching to support the diverse needs of individual children and young people.
 - 2.2.2 To ensure that there is a high quality programme of workforce development to train education, health and care staff to meet the needs of Rotherham's children, young people and their families.
 - 2.2.3 To ensure that Rotherham schools can deliver a high quality graduated response from health, social care and teaching staff to ensure that inclusion support from specialist inclusion services are available at the point of identified need.
 - 2.2.4 To ensure sufficiency of school places within Rotherham for children aged 0-19 who have identified special education needs and whose education, health and care plans identify that only special school provision can meet their identified education, health and care needs and reduce dependence on high cost out of area placements which remove children and young people from their local communities.

- 2.2.5 To ensure a sufficient range of provision for young people aged 16-25 to ensure that there are a variety of pathways to support young people to become confident, independent adults.
- 2.3 The creation of additional in borough provision will lead to a longer term saving on high needs funding as in borough placements cost on average £30k per annum less than out of authority placements.
- 2.4 The sufficiency plan will be refreshed annually to take account of the changing picture of demand. This will be reviewed and monitored annually to assist forward planning in relation to the phase 3 identification of additional provision needed from 2025 onwards.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 **Option 1** – retain SEND sufficiency at the current level. This will mean that pupil numbers with SEND continue to rise without a linked rise in ‘in borough’ provision, increasing the number of out of authority placements and increasing further the pressures that exist on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- 3.2 **Option 2 – Recommended** option, to seek Cabinet approval of the Special Education Needs Strategy 2019 for publication. To approve a period of consultation with schools and settings in relation to the additional places required and seek proposals to increase educational provision for Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) across the Borough linked to the allocation of available capital funding from central government. Following identification of the preferred projects, to seek approval to deliver the projects and allocate capital investment where necessary to support delivery.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Ahead of receiving this funding, the DfE asked local authorities to complete and publish a concise plan to show how they would invest their share of the fund on their local offer page, and the DfE are now asking local authorities to refresh that plan to receive the additional funding announced in May and December 2018.
- 4.2 A condition of receiving the additional capital funding is that authorities prepare and publish strategic plans setting out how the special educational needs of children and young people in their area should be met and, in particular, how the special provision capital fund will be used in accordance with the overall strategic plans that authorities have drawn up.
- 4.3 **DfE - Special provision capital fund Guidance (extract):**

Local authorities will need to:

- **Consult with parents and carers.** *Effective engagement with parents and carers is crucial in building and implementing a strategy that develops support for changes. This helps local authorities ensure that services will meet the needs of children and families.*

- **Consult with schools, FE colleges and other institutions which offer special educational provision.** Local authorities should work with providers to identify how capital investment can best improve the quality of provision available for children and young people with EHC plans.
- **Consider how to invest revenue and capital funding strategically to maximise the benefit of both in the context of the current infrastructure and programmes.** This might include looking at how to expand participation in an existing learning programme by making capital adjustments so that children and young people with SEN and disabilities can also attend.
- **Collaborate with other local authorities** to form partnerships to work effectively across borders.

Before receiving the SEND funding allocation, local authorities need to:

- Consult with parents and carers of children with SEN and disabilities and young people with SEN and disabilities.
- Work with education providers to agree how the capital can best be targeted.
- Fill in the short plan template, confirming that the requirement to consult with parents, carers and young people has been met, and including information about the other groups that they have consulted.
- Publish a plan on their local offer page showing how they plan to invest their funding, before the deadline specified below.
- **Note:**
 - Where local authorities work collaboratively on projects, these must be listed on each local authorities' plan with an explanation of which other local authorities they have collaborated with and how.
 - Where a project will both create additional places and improve facilities for current and future pupils, local authorities should show on the plan how much funding will be spent on each of the two objectives. This may involve estimating how much of the project's investment would go towards each of these two aims.

Local authorities do **not** need to send the completed form to the Department for Education.

Local authorities **should not** include costings where this would have a negative commercial impact. Where not all costings are included in the first publication of the plan, local authorities should re-publish the plan as soon as it is no longer commercially sensitive to publish this information.

- 4.4 The Local Authority consulted with interested parties in line with the guidance from the Department as above with the outcomes informing Phase 1 proposals approved by Cabinet. Good practice dictates that SEND sufficiency should be kept under review as pupil numbers and needs can change over a period of time.
- 4.5 This report seeks permission to begin a period of consultation with schools and settings regarding the additional places required in response to the SEND Sufficiency Strategy refresh, and to seek proposals to increase SEND capacity across the Borough linked to the allocation of available capital funding from central government.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Implementation timetable:

May 2019	Seek Cabinet approval to publish the SEND sufficiency strategy update and consult with schools and settings in relation to proposals to create additional capacity.
September 2019	Seek Cabinet approval of recommended proposals to create additional SEND capacity and the allocation of capital funding to deliver approved projects.
October 2019 to September 2020	Delivery of capital projects approved by Cabinet to create additional capacity.

- 5.2 Individual capital projects will be project managed by the Council's Asset Management Service with accountability for delivery to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment.
- 5.3 Project implementation work with respective schools and Academy Trusts to implement the proposals will be led by officers in education and overseen by the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The CYPS programme has school capital funding which could be used to support the SEN proposals received from schools and academies where capital works are required. A business case will be required from each interested party that will outline the proposal and benefits of the scheme, both financial and operational.
- 6.2 Any investment proposals or cost implications that may result from the analysis of the consultation feedback will be subject to future reports and approval mechanisms in the context of the Council's Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 6.3 The High Needs Block has an overall deficit of £15.8m at the end of 2018/19 and includes a 2018/19 in-year overspend of £5.1m. The proposals outlined in the report are part of the financial recovery plan to operate the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block within the annual funding allocation, which is £31.44m in 2019/20.

- 6.4 The projected annual cost savings on the High Needs budget of developing the SEN units on mainstream school and academy sites is estimated to be in the region of £1.5m (based on a cost saving of £30k per place per annum) through reduction in the number of high cost placements. The savings will reduce current spend against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and will not impact on the Council's revenue budget.
- 6.5 The savings will be achieved in two ways. Firstly, through reducing the need for high numbers of newly assessed children and young people to be educated outside Rotherham, and being able to offer high quality provision in borough. Secondly, for those children and young people currently placed in provision outside Rotherham, investigation with families about whether a child's needs can be better met in a Rotherham provision at annual review of the Education Health and Care plan. This will significantly reduce the escalating costs to the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs budget.
- 6.6 The proposals are also expected to have a positive impact on the Councils Home to School Transport budget, due to a reduction in the number of out of authority placements and the additional transport journeys incurred.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 Should any of the proposals brought forward to create additional SEND capacity meet the requirement threshold to complete a full prescribed alteration under, the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 (guidance dated April 2016), then separate proposals would be brought forward for Cabinet determination as part of the delivery programme.
- 7.2 Section 14 Education Act 1996 requires a local authority to have regard to securing SEN provision is made for pupils with SEN Needs. Following enactment of The Children and Families Act 2014, the local authority retains responsibility for commissioning services for vulnerable children and young people with SEN and to keep such provision for children and young people with SEN and disabilities under review including its sufficiency (s.315 Education Act 1996), and to promote wellbeing and improve quality, working in concert with parents, young people, and providers. The Act is clear that, when considering any re-organisation of provision, decision makers must be clear how they are satisfied that the proposed alternative arrangements will lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with SEN.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 The proposals will create teaching and learning and support staff employment opportunities and recruitment to these posts will be required following Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council recruitment procedures for Local Authority maintained provision and Academy Trust recruitment procedures where proposals are linked to Academy status schools.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The additional SEND places created within the borough will give more children and young people the opportunity to access high quality provision closer to home to meet their educational needs.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that public bodies, in exercising their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- i. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other unlawful conduct under the Act,
- ii. advance equality of opportunity and
- iii. foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

10.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) (Appendix 3) was completed following Cabinet approval of the Send sufficiency phase 1 proposals. This was refreshed in January 2019 and will be refreshed again during the consultation with schools and settings and seeking of proposals to create additional capacity period and details of the revised EIA will be included within the follow-up Cabinet report scheduled for September 2019 seeking approval of projects and allocation of capital to provide the facilities needed.

10.3 The Council must ensure it meets its public law duties when making decisions, including meeting its public sector equality duty. It must consider all relevant information, disregard irrelevant information, act in accordance with the statutory requirements and make its decision in a fair and transparent manner.

10.4 The additional specialist provision provided in phase 2 would allow more parents and carers to access education for their child in accordance with their wishes within the local area in future years, in an inclusive and innovative learning environment.

11. Implications for Partners

11.1 There will need to be further involvement and engagement with Planning Department, Asset Management Services, Transport services, SEND Specialist Services, Finance Section and Schools and Academies, who will all be engaged and involved in the development of the new provision. This will be overseen by the Strategic School Organisation Group and SEND Board, reporting to the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services, Chief Executive and Elected Members as necessary and appropriate.

12. Risks and Mitigation

- 12.1 There are always risks and uncertainties when school place provision is considered, since future pupil numbers are based on estimations. Over provision at one school could influence pupil numbers at other schools. However, current provision is full or over-subscribed and this trend is set to continue, meaning that more pupils are being placed in provision out of authority increasing the financial burden on the High Needs Block.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Jon Stonehouse – Strategic Director of Children and Young People’s Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of:-

	Named Officer	Date
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	01/05/19
Assistant Director of Legal Services Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	26/04/19
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)	Amy Leech	26/03/19
Head of Procurement (if appropriate)	N/A	N/A

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