

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET

1.	Meeting:-	Cabinet
2.	Date:-	20th July 2011
3.	Title:-	Services for Disabled Children
4.	Directorate:-	Environment and Development Services and Children & Young People's Services

5. Summary

The experience of case work with a small number of children over a three year period has caused professionals working in education, social care and health to express concerns over an apparent lack of specialist provision, or flexibility within existing resources, which has led to children being placed out of area and, particularly at residential special schools. Although the number of children concerned is small, the cost of such placements is very high and the pressures on the families, carers and children and young people involved can be extreme.

Hence there is a need to develop the provision for children and young people who may benefit from a more flexible social care and education partnership and develop a comprehensive integrated approach to provision for disabled children and family support across the ages ranges from diagnosis up to 25 years of age and to have these needs met within Rotherham.

This paper lays out the current position with regard to ongoing discussions and planning around the development of services to disabled children, including the background and rationale for those discussions. The paper reviews all of the considered options for the development and as a result of further recent analysis of data, presents the option which if implemented, will achieve considerable efficiencies in cost of provision for looked after disabled children.

6. Recommendations

- **That the report is received and the proposals are approved.**
- **To support in principle the reconfiguration of the Orchard Children's Centre building to accommodate the reduction in current overnight respite services from 2 units to a 1 eight short breaks and 1 emergency bed unit and on the same site;**
- **The establishment and development of a 5 bedded medium to long term therapeutic residential unit within the Orchard Centre for children and young people with a range of cognitive, physical disabilities, Learning Difficulties, challenging behaviour and Attachment disorders**
- **That the site at Churchfields be put back on the open market.**

7. Proposals and Details

The issues around local provision may be summarised as follows:

- A lack of medium to long term residential provision for children in crisis which has led to inappropriate residencies, beyond the permitted 12 week period, at short break provision.
- A lack of a suitable transitional (learning house) facility for older young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD) to be supported in developing independence.
- A lack of family support and early intervention to develop positive behaviour and routines prior to age eight. This has been addressed to some extent through the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme.
- A lack of an integrated education and care residential option which can extend beyond the limitations of short break provision.

There are three policies for which the following proposals will respond to the above issues and achieve better service delivery for less cost, they are:

- **Prevention and Early Intervention** – This seeks to lessen the strain on families by providing overnight respite, some of which is currently provided in Bramley House and Cherry Tree House. A major Government strategy and corresponding grant funding – Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) – has increased supportive activity for families. In Rotherham this takes the form of respite which is:
 - Activity based – commissioned mainly from the VCS at a value of £450k for 2011/12 from the Early Intervention Grant.
 - Overnight respite – provided by the Local Authority either with short break foster carers or in one of two residential units at the Orchard Centre – Bramley House and Cherry Tree House.
- **Special Education Schooling** – Sixty children are educated outside Rotherham of which approximately 48 are in secondary education. On this Rotherham currently spends approximately £1.7million per year on out of area special school non-residential and residential placements. Of this funding £232,495 is Revenue and the remainder is Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Additionally, 2 children are placed in residential special school to meet their care needs due to repeated family placement breakdown at an approximate cost of £450k.
- **Looked After Children** - Four children are educated outside of Rotherham and often have additional, more expensive, care needs. By necessity these have to be placed outside the authority due to the lack of a medium term residential care and currently cost the Authority approximately £630K per year. The redevelopment of the Orchard Centre would enable the Authority to retain these young persons within Rotherham and achieve a corresponding reduction to the Revenue account requirement.

The case for closer integration and better coordination of services for disabled children and their families is made on the basis that there is a causative link between all of these three areas. A coordinated and more flexible response to the use of existing resources will provide the level of support that children and their families need.

Such a service model would be consistent with the commitment to prevention and early intervention and would significantly improve the prospects for all children – up to and including those with the greatest level of need, for example those who require residential care and to have their needs met within Rotherham.

Service Proposals

- The reconfiguration of the Orchard Children’s Centre building to accommodate the reduction in current overnight respite services from 2 units to a 1 eight short breaks plus 1 emergency bedded unit and
- The establishment and development of a 5 bedded Long Term Therapeutic residential unit within the Orchard Centre for children and young people with a range of cognitive, physical disabilities, Learning Difficulties, challenging behaviour and Attachment disorders
- An aligned post 16 ‘learning’ provision, in partnership with schools – a ‘learning house’ although further work needs to be undertaken to establish if this can be located on the Orchard centre site or an alternative location found.

Discounted Options

Both the Churchfields and the Park Lea options have been discounted at SLT, the former because of commercial value and the latter due to the unsuitability of the location.

8. Finance

Support to children into adulthood – Post 16

This is currently a deficiency in service provision which can be overcome by implementing the above proposals.

Revenue Case (Residential Provision)

Sources of funds:	<u>£'000</u>
• PCT Grant	-
• Placements not required	658
• Existing Orchard Centre budget	1306
	1964
Uses of funds:	
• New consolidated facility at Orchard Centre	1306
Full year savings, say, 4 at average £165k per child	658
	1964

Capital Case

Use of funds:	<u>£'000</u>
• Build/conversion cost of Orchard Centre	850
• Acquisition/build/conversion costs of "learning house"	250
	1100
Source of funds:	
• AHDC Capital Grant	208
• Education Capital Programme	542
• Notional contribution of Churchfields Capital receipt (estimated gross approx. £1.5m)	1500
	2250

Please note that any surplus arising out of the Churchfields receipt to contribute to 'central capital funds'.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Orchard Centre site is technically complex to redevelop. The acquisition and redevelopment of a building for a "learning house" is subject to availability, on the market.

It is unlikely that children and young people with complex needs currently placed out of area could be brought back into Rotherham unless the above is carried out. The proposed development aims to minimise the need for further such placements and create a saving in the medium to long term. The fact that a significant proportion of those attending out of area special schools will be reaching school leaving age during the preparatory period, may present an opportunity to make further, medium term revenue savings.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- Disabled Children is a high profile service area both locally and nationally. There is a current Green Paper on Special Education, so further changes can be expected.
- Residential provision, both respite and long term, are subject to strict Ofsted guidance and inspection. The Orchard Centre provision currently has a 'satisfactory' rating.
- All services for disabled children should be consistent with the CYP Plan, the Corporate Plan and the LSP Priorities.

11. Consultation

Cabinet Member for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children
6th April, 2011.

Strategic Leadership Team 27th June, 2011.

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Appendix 1 - Profile of children with additional needs and disabilities – including Education

AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN (AHDC)

AHDC emphasised the importance of *respite activities and respite care [known as ‘Short Breaks’]* as essential tools to maintain and support families, ultimately in enabling parents to care and children to stay at home. The introduction of AHDC brought with it a challenge for each local authority to deliver a full service offer, which from April 1st 2011 has become a legal duty placed upon LA’s to deliver **sufficient** short breaks for disabled children and families. Further guidance is expected from the DfE on the content of the required Short Breaks Statement which each LA has to publish by 1st October 2011.

This offer includes providing short breaks services to children who have varying levels of needs:

Group A - Children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (who have severe learning disabilities or behaviour which is challenging) OR those children and young people whose challenging behaviour is associated with other impairments such as severe learning disabilities.

Group B - Children and young people with complex health needs including those with disability and life limiting conditions, and/or those who require palliative care and/or those with associated impairments such as cognitive or sensory impairments and/or have moving / handling needs and/or require special equipment / adaptations.

Group C - Children and Young People whose condition and care requirements are described as moderate.

The AHDC agenda has stated that LA’s should prioritise short breaks for children in groups A & B but not exclude children in group C. **Rotherham has extended the range of and access to short breaks services for children who fall into groups A, B and C from 237 in 2009 to 458 by the end of 2010.**

The table below shows the breakdown of children in groups A, B & C who were accessing short breaks via AHDC commissioned services at the end of March 2010 and the end of March 2011:

	March 2010	March 2011
Group A	195 children	345
Group B	58 children	112
Group C	66 children	67
Total	319 children	524 children

The increase in short breaks available in Rotherham has resulted in greater choice for children, young people and parents/carers. A recent consultation by Rotherham Parents Carer Forum (RPCF) shows that 39.2% of their members surveyed said that their child had attended some form of AHDC short break. Of these 96% stated that the short break had been a positive experience for the child and family as a whole.

In March 2011 we have commissioned a wide range of short breaks providers, principally from the voluntary & community sector, but also RPCF, services from health, education and social care to continue to deliver short breaks activities. £900k is allocated from the Early Intervention Grant for this activity.

Findings:

- **The number of children / families accessing earlier intervention options has increased significantly.**
- **High levels of customer satisfaction are recorded.**
- **Rotherham well placed to meet the new statutory duty.**

CHILDREN SUPPORTED BY THE CHILDREN’S SOCIAL CARE DISABILITY TEAM

There are currently 319 children supported by the Children’s Social Care Disability Team, and this number is broadly stable since 2009. There is a higher caseload for children and young people within the secondary school phase (aged 12+) than primary and younger. Currently 5 children are subject to a Child Protection Plan and 29 are Looked After Children. Although the number of mainstream LAC with disabilities has stayed consistent [30 in 2009], placements of these children outside the authority have actually increased in number [6 in 2009 to 14 in 2011] and as a percentage of the LAC population year on year:

At 31st May, of the 29 disabled looked after children, 14 are placed out of authority, = **48%**
 Of the remaining looked after children total, 111 are placed out of authority, = **29%**

84 children on the Team’s caseload currently access formal / local authority respite and short break provision; 61 within the Orchard Centre and 23 with specialist respite Foster Carers. Whilst the numbers attending Orchard has slowly decreased over the past ten years, the number of Foster Carers and children getting foster respite has reduced at a greater rate. Reversing this decline, and getting an appropriate balance forms part of the Fostering Service Action Plan for 2011.

The age profile of Children using the Orchard Centre at 31/3/11:

	Bramley	Cherry Tree
17	11	4
16	5	5
15	2	7
14	5	0
13	3	2
12	2	3
Under 12	3	9
TOTAL	31	30

Findings:

- The increase in children getting ADHC interventions has not yet translated through to social care.
- Disabled Looked After Children are disproportionately likely to be placed out of Rotherham.
- The cost of such placements is more expensive for disabled LAC – foster placements for disabled LAC are between £40-80k pa, whilst for the general LAC population between £30-60k pa.
- 25 children accessing the Orchard Centre are due to leave in the next two years.

EARLY YEARS DATA

The chart below shows the number of children supported via The Early Years Inclusion Outreach Team from 2003 to date. The number of children identified and meeting the criteria for support from The Team has increased significantly over the past two years. This increase does not appear to be linked to one specific cause, and trend analysis is therefore difficult. It is however predicted that these children will require continuing and varying levels of support from a wide variety of services in the future, including short break provision, possible social care support and special education.

Most importantly it should be noted:

- that the number of pre-school children Statemented has declined [mainly because of change to funding rules for schools – previously a Statement was needed in order to get additional funds, that is now not the case]
- that the number of children able to be accommodated in Mainstream provision has significantly increased, this is due to a development in practice that means that early years outreach staff go with the child in their first year of schooling and train / prepare the school to be able to provide for them. If this very early trend continues, it would mean a significant reduction in the number of children requiring Specialist Education provision.

Year	Total Number of Children in Enhanced Provision	Numbers of Children Transition into Mainstream Provision	Number of Children Transition into Specialist Provision	Number of Children with a Statement of SEN	Overall Percentage of Children Transferring to Mainstream Provision
2003/04	26	16	10	18	61.5%
2004/05	28	20	8	15	71.4%
2005/06	27	20	7	10	74%
2006/07	25	19	6	10	76%
2007/08	33	23	10	10	69.7%
2008/09	25	19	6	9	76%
2009/10	27	27	0	5	100%
2010/11	71	Projected 65	Projected 6	Projected 8	91.5%
2011/12	66 to date				

In addition to these Early Years Service numbers, there are a further 20 Foundation Stage [pre-school] children that attend our Special Schools – 5 under 2 years, 2 aged 3-4 years and 13 aged 4-5 years. This occurs primarily due to parental choice.

Findings:

- **Clear evidence of benefit of early years support in reducing need for Special Education provision.**
- **Very significant increase over each of last two years.**

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS IN ROTHERHAM

Educated in Rotherham Mainstream Schools

Currently almost a quarter of Rotherham's school age children has a Special Educational Need [SEN] (23.6% - 10,074 children in Jan 11). This is broadly consistent over the last three years. In education SEN is categorised in one of three levels, *i) School Action, ii) School Action Plus and iii) Statemented.*

Primary need is recorded for all SEN pupils within schools who are within the top two tiers of need (Statemented and School Action Plus), this is 4,551 [10.5% of the school population]. 998 children (2.3% of school population) have the highest level of need and are statemented. The categories of Primary Need for 2011 are:

1. Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties	1039 [22.9% of SEN total]
2. Moderate Learning Difficulty	832 [18.3%]
3. Specific Learning Difficulty	765 [16.8%]
4. Autistic Spectrum Disorder	697 [15.3%]
5. Speech, Language and Communications	440 [9.7%]
6. Other Difficulty/Disability	229 [5%]
7. Severe Learning Difficulty	176 [3.9%]
8. Physical Disability	157 [3.5%]
9. Hearing Impaired	80 [1.8%]
10. Visually Impaired	63 [1.4%]
11. Profound and Multi Learning Difficulty	61 [1.3%]
12. Multi-Sensory Impairment	5 [0.1%]

These figures are similar for each of the last 4 years with the exception of Autistic Spectrum Disorder, which has increased by 33%, balanced by a reduction in Moderate and Specific Learning Difficulties. Comparative benchmarking analysis shows that autism in Rotherham schools is almost double the rate at National and Regional levels and above all other statistical neighbours. The reasons for this are being considered, but there could be a specific issue associated with *clinical diagnosis*. A Scrutiny Review has been requested to look into these discrepancies.

Children whose needs cannot be met by Rotherham Mainstream Provision

There are currently 60 children and young people whose educational needs cannot be met by local mainstream provision. 38% of these children's primary need is autism and 25% have behaviour, emotional or social difficulties. However due to the complexity of the cases involved it is highly likely that they also have multiple needs. 80% are within the secondary education phase [11-18 yrs.]

Last year £2,321,832 was spent on funding the out of authority education provision of these children. The Primary Need categories Autistic Spectrum Disorder; Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties; and Severe Learning Difficulty account for more than £2m of the total, and provision for 16-18 years olds accounts for £630k. This funding comes from the DSG.

- **Autism in Rotherham schools is almost double the rate of National and Regional levels and above all other statistical neighbours.**
- **Evidence of progress in retaining our children in Mainstream schools and profile, based on current ages, is for continued reduction in external specialist provision; the 'inclusion' agenda.**
- **A key reason for this progress is the whole child / integrated approach. This is not just about formal learning, how a child is in school is determined by their whole life experience, and hence the link between outreach support, short breaks and schooling.**
- **NB – the current Green Paper on Special Education takes an opposite view to 'inclusion'.**