

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT MEMBERS

1	Meeting:-	Cabinet Member for Children & Education Services
2	Date:-	16 February 2015
3	Title:-	Rotherham Parent Forum Funding
4	Directorate:-	NAS

5. Summary

The Rotherham Parents Forum delivers a number of activities and services to both parents and practitioners in relation to Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Funding from the Department for Education to the value of £10,000 which is restricted for Parent Participation and a £5,000 contribution from RMBC since 2009 has enabled parent volunteers to carry out these activities.

In order to sustain and develop the Rotherham Parents Forum in the current climate of reform and uncertainty around their national funding post 2015, it is proposed that RMBC commission the Rotherham Parents Forum to the value of £45,000 for the period 1 January 2015 to 31 March 2016, to provide information and support to parents/carers and to play a full and active role in implementing the SEND Reforms.

We are seeking a waiver from Standing Orders to not undertake a competitive tendering exercise on the basis of the unique nature of the partnership with Rotherham's Parents Forum, which is the only parent led service locally that can meet our needs and has already established links and built up trust with parents and carers.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Waive (in accordance with Standing Order 49 - Tender invitation and receipt of tenders) for Rotherham Parents Forum funding from Rotherham Borough Council.

7. Proposals and Details

The Rotherham Parents Forum delivers a number of activities and services to both parents and practitioners in relation to Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

Funding from the Department for Education to the value of £10,000 which is restricted for Parent Participation and a £5,000 contribution from RMBC since 2009 has enabled parent volunteers to carry out these activities. This has resulted in a common practice of real co-production and authentic partnership working between parents and practitioners in Rotherham.

The Parents Forum directly reach out to over 400 families in Rotherham whilst actively taking part at strategic level, consulting and feeding back to both parties.

In order to sustain and develop the Rotherham Parents Forum in the current climate of reform and uncertainty around their national funding post 2015, it is proposed that RMBC commission the Rotherham Parents Forum to the value of £45,000 for the period 1 January 2015 to 31 March 2016, to undertake the following:

- Provide information and be a point of contact for parents and support the attendance of Forum officers at various SEND partnership meetings, including the training of more Forum members to widen the pool of those able to contribute.
- Increase the number of Forum drop in sessions from 1 to 3, extending their location to the town centre and the Forum Premises, in addition to the existing sessions at Kimberworth.
- Increase the number of briefing workshops for parents of newly diagnosed children by one per term.
- Ascertain the views of parents (of children and young people with special educational needs and disability), including with parents who are not members of the PCF, and provide this information to RMBC and when it holds statutory consultations, including those regarding :
 - The SEND local offer
 - School planning and re-organisations.

We are seeking a waiver from Standing Orders to not undertake a competitive tendering exercise on the basis of the unique nature of the partnership with Rotherham's Parents Forum, which is the only parent led service locally that can meet our needs and has already established links and built up trust with parents and carers.

8. Finance

The allocation of £45,000 to the Rotherham Parents Forum for the work outlined above will be made from the SEN Reform Grant and the SEND Implementation Grant (New Burdens).

9. Risks and Uncertainties

That approval is not forthcoming and as a result there is not effective joint working and effective participation of parents and carers in the SEND Reforms agenda.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Children and Families Act 2014
SEND Reforms

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