

17 March 2014**Agenda Item: 13****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION STANDARDS AND
INCLUSION****SEND POLICY AND PROVISION – PROPOSED RESTRUCTURE OF THE
ASSESSMENT AND COMMISSIONING TEAMS AND EDUCATIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to implement the proposed new structure for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy and Provision which is located in the Education Standards and Inclusion Division of the Children, Families and Cultural Services Department. These changes, if approved, will take effect from 1 April 2014.

Information and Advice

2. SEND Policy and Provision is responsible for four key service areas which are organised into the teams described below:
 - 1) Assessment - this team manages the new Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan Pathway and assessment processes for children and young people with SEN and disability (SEND)
 - 2) Commissioning – this team is responsible for commissioning services and provision and distributing financial resources to schools for pupils with SEND
 - 3) Educational Psychology Service – this service provides psychological advice and support to schools, settings, families and to others within the County Council
 - 4) Schools and Families Specialist services – these services provide a range of specialist educational advice and support to schools and families of children and young people with SEND.
3. There are three main drivers which will impact on the future delivery of these services for children and young people with SEN and disability, which are:
 - a) *The Government's SEN reforms and work of the SEN Pathfinder project:*

With effect from September 2014 statements of special educational needs will be replaced by Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans. A new multi-agency integrated assessment process will be introduced which will apply from birth to young people up to the age of 25 years. This new process provides the opportunity for integrated ways of working which will improve the quality of service received by children, young people and their families through the combined effects of partnership working across services and the greater involvement of parents required by this new approach. It is proposed that these new arrangements will be delivered through reconfigured services.

b) The implementation of the outcomes of the SEBD review:

Following the review of arrangements for pupils with Social Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties (SEBD) in Nottinghamshire, a new strategy entitled '5 Steps to Collective Responsibility' was published and agreed by the County Council in November 2012. This strategy is in line with national developments and as such Nottinghamshire County Council is progressively devolving resources to partnerships of schools to encourage collective responsibility and collaborative arrangements for pupils with SEBD. The County Council will need to retain the capacity to monitor the effectiveness of these new arrangements. This additional capacity is reflected in the proposed new structure.

c) The requirement to make financial savings:

In order to achieve the required savings of £493,000 described in the outline business case (CO3c), a number of changes have been proposed to the way in which services are organised and delivered. These changes will involve staff reductions and a reconfiguration of some services which will result in revised structures for three teams. These revised structures are attached as **Appendix 1**. The structures have been subject to a consultation exercise with all staff affected by the proposals and their trade unions.

4. The proposed structural changes will impact on the Assessment, Commissioning and Psychology service with effect from April 2014. It is likely that it may be necessary to make further changes which will be the subject of a future report, if required.

Consultation

5. The formal consultation period relating to the proposed new structure for SEND Policy and Provision was launched on 5 November 2013 and ended on 19 December 2013.
6. During the consultation period, feedback was received either by e-mail or through discussion at team meetings. In addition feedback has been provided through discussions relating to the development of the new EHC Plan Pathway which has informed decisions regarding the finalisation of the new structures.
7. Relevant trade unions have been informed of the consultation and were provided with copies of the proposed new structures. **Appendix 2** provides details of the feedback received and subsequent proposals to address the issues which were raised.
8. The main issues arising from the consultation were in relation to the:

- a) capacity to deliver the new statutory requirements relating to EHC Plans
- b) capacity to respond to the needs of emerging SEBD partnerships.

9. In response to these concerns the revised structures identified in **Appendix 1** show:

- a) two new permanent EHC Co-ordinator posts which will be filled by seconding two staff from Futures and one temporary EHC Co-ordinator post which will be filled on a one year basis and funded by the Additional Burdens Grant available from the Government to implement the SEN reforms.
- b) three SEBD Partnership Development Officer posts which will be funded from resources released from the reconfiguration of Pupil Referral Units as part of the implementation of the SEBD strategy.
- c) four posts with responsibility for commissioning SEBD provision will transfer from the central team located with the Pupil Referral Units into a new SEBD Commissioning team.

Other Options Considered

10. Different models of service delivery have been considered and featured in the consultation exercise. The decision to adopt the proposals in **Appendix 1** was based on the principles of best value, the provision of high quality customer service and compliance with legal requirements.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

11. To take account of the three drivers for change described earlier in this report and ensure that the required savings identified in the outline business case (C03c) are achieved for this service area.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

13. The proposed structures will deliver the savings required in the outline business case (C03c) amounting to a total of £493,000 in the 2014/15 financial year.
14. Three teams have been enhanced:
- a) two new permanent EHC Co-ordinator posts will be filled by secondment arrangements which will be funded by Futures at no additional cost to the County Council. One EHC co-ordinator post will be filled on a one year basis funded by the

Additional Burdens Grant available from the Government to implement the SEN reforms.

- b) three Partnership Development Officer posts will be funded from resources released from the reconfiguration of Pupil Referral Units as part of the implementation of the SEBD strategy.
- c) four posts with responsibility for commissioning SEBD provision will transfer from the central team located with the Pupil Referral Units into a new SEBD Commissioning team. These posts will be funded from the disaggregation of PRU resources in line with the implementation of the SEBD strategy.

Human Resources Implications

- 15. The County Council approved HR processes will be followed in order to enable staff into the new structures. HR processes for voluntary redundancy will be followed where applicable. The relevant trade unions will continue to be fully informed as these processes are implemented.

Implications for Service Users

- 16. The proposed reconfiguration of services aims to enhance the experience of service users through a more integrated streamlined and person centred approach.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the proposed new staffing structure for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy and Provision is approved with effect from April 2014.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 20/02/14)

- 17. The Children and Young People's Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (NDR 28/02/14)

- 18. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 13 of the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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