

**Executive Response to the Final Report of the Special Schools Post-16
SEN Scrutiny Task Group – part 2**

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the Executive's response to the final report of the Special Schools Post-16 SEN Task Group – part 2 (endorsed June 2013).

Action Required of the Committee

2. To note the Executive's responses and agree further action as appropriate.

Background

3. The Task Group was established by Children's Services Select Committee in September 2010 with the following terms of reference:
 - 1) To establish the strengths and weaknesses of current special school and post-16 SEN provision in Wiltshire, taking into account the views of service users, parents and other stakeholder groups;
 - 2) To consider examples of best practice in special school and post-16 provision in Wiltshire and other authority areas;
 - 3) To make recommendations with respect to how special schools and post-16 SEN provision can be developed to ensure improved outcomes for Wiltshire residents with SEN.
4. Early on in the Task Group's work, members concluded that its terms of reference were very broad and could potentially encompass a huge area of work. It was agreed that it would be most productive to focus on particular areas of concern or interest.
5. The Committee received the Task Group's initial final report in July 2012 and the executive response was received in September 2012. The Committee asked the Task Group to reconvene to undertake further work, consider the executive responses in detail, and to receive the

various pieces of further information that had been offered. The Task Group's Final Report – part 2 was endorsed by the Select Committee on 6 June 2013 and referred to the executive for response.

Task Group Recommendations and Executive Responses

Future Focus for the Children's Select Committee

Task Group recommendations:

1. The Committee gives services for children and young people with SEN/LDD continued attention and considers them a priority within the new Council's overview and scrutiny work programme;

No executive response required.

Short breaks for children and young people with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)

Task Group recommendations:

2. If there were to be any reconfiguration of short break provision in Wiltshire, any savings identified should be retained for services for children and young people with SEN/LDD and their families;
3. If a reconfiguration of Wiltshire's short break provision was proposed, the Committee receives data showing the proposed capacity of the new model, demonstrating that it could meet the demand for short breaks across Wiltshire and not equate to a reduction in the current provision;
4. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services provides a response to the figures included under paragraph 16 showing that a large proportion of the overnight short break days available in Wiltshire are used by a small number of service users;

Executive response:

Please see the Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People report included elsewhere in this agenda.

Accessibility of services

5. The Council aims to locate information about all services for families with children with SEN/LDD in one location online and that the Committee focuses on this area in any future consideration of Wiltshire's Support and Aspiration Pathfinder;

Executive response:

Staff from Children's Services are currently involving in developing the 'Local Offer' information to provide clarity for parents and carers of disabled children and children with special educational needs on the support and services available across education, health and social care. Local Offer information will be available in one place. This work is being led by the Council, but will require input from health commissioners and providers and from schools. All work on the Local Offer will be undertaken in conjunction with Wiltshire Parent Carer Council to ensure that it is clear and easy for parents to understand.

Beyond school for students with SEN/LDD

Task Group recommendations:

6. Wiltshire's special schools, Wiltshire College and the Council work together to embed a single planned and structured process for the transitioning of young people with SEN/LDD from school to further education or training;
7. Wiltshire's special schools and Wiltshire College work together and share the expertise built up in the special schools, particularly in regards to provision for children and young people with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD);

Executive response:

The majority of young people in Wiltshire's special schools are likely to progress to Wiltshire College at either 16 or 18 years of age. Wiltshire learners that are educated at an Independent Specialist College (ISC) are also likely to attend Wiltshire College to complete their education. Where Wiltshire College is an appropriate transition we facilitate partnership working between schools, Independent Specialist Colleges and Mainstream College to ensure high levels of expertise and support for young people that can include areas of Independent Living that could not be offered by Mainstream College alone. 5-day LLDD provision at local college, aimed at young people leaving Wiltshire's special schools, has worked very well as an alternative to Independent Specialist College (ISC). This is offered at the Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham campus sites of Wiltshire College.

The Strategic Planning and Places team have recently applied via the Education Funding Agency for Demographic Growth Capital funding to support developments at the Trowbridge, Salisbury and Lackham campuses of the College for this cohort of learners. The College were awarded £1.8m with a further £414,000 awarded to

Wiltshire Council for the refurbishment of a property near the Chippenham campus for co-location of St Nicholas post-16 provision. The development will lead the way in further development of partnership working with Wiltshire's special schools and Wiltshire College.

Based upon the MOD's Army Basing announcement in March this year, the current Wiltshire Army population of about 10,800 troops is due to increase to about 14,800 by 2020 at the latest, following a significant number of units transferring to the Salisbury Plain Training Area. However, MOD will continue to review the size of its numbers during this period in light of any changes in Foreign or Fiscal policies, and further changes could occur.

Conclusion

6. Members are asked to:
 1. Note the above Executive's response to the final report of the Special Schools Post-16 SEN Scrutiny Task Group – part 2; and
 2. Agree any further action as appropriate.

Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Appendices

None

Background documents

Final Report of the Special Schools and Post-16 SEN Scrutiny Task Group – part 2 (June 2013)

Executive Response to the Final Report of the Special Schools and Post-16 SEN Task Group (September 2012)

Final Report of the Special Schools and Post-16 SEN Task Group (July 2012)