

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

Meeting: Children's Select Committee
Place: Council Chamber - Council Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham,
SN15 1ER
Date: Thursday 6 June 2013
Time: 10.30 am

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 29 May 2013 and indicated that the report detailed below would be to follow. This is now available and is attached to this Agenda Supplement.

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This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

- 10 **Final Report of the Special Schools & Post-16 SEN Task Group - part 2**
(Pages 1 - 20)
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DATE OF PUBLICATION: Friday 31 May 2013

Final Report of the Special Schools and Post-16 SEN Task Group – part 2

Purpose

1. To present the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Schools and Post-16 SEN Task Group for endorsement. The Task Group brought an initial final report with recommendations to Committee in July 2012, but further work was requested.

Background

2. The Task Group was established by Children's Services Select Committee in September 2010 with the following terms of reference:
 - a) 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;
 - b) To consider examples of best practice in special school and post-16 provision in Wiltshire and other authority areas;
 - c) 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.
3. 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.
4. The Committee received the Task Group's initial final report in July 2012 and the executive response was received in September 2012 – attached at Appendix 1. 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 Committee asked the Task Group to consider the following new topics:

- consideration of the identification of Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BSED) in primary school-aged children.
 - an investigation to identify out of county resources being used by Wiltshire.
 - an examination of mainstream schools to identify the level of SEN provision they make.
5. The Task Group has not had the capacity to investigate these issues in addition to the work reported below. However, members believe that services for children and young people with SEN/LDD warrant continued consideration by the Committee and recommends that they are considered a priority within the new Council's overview and scrutiny work programme (**Recommendation 1**).

Methodology

6. During this second leg of work, the Task Group met formally on three occasions between January and May 2013 and comprised the following membership:

Cllr Graham Payne (Chairman)
Rev Alice Kemp
Cllr Carole Soden (no longer a member of the Council)
Cllr Tony Trotman

7. Members of the Task Group also attended a meeting of the Special Schools Heads' Forum, a sub-group of the Wiltshire Association of Secondary School Headteachers, and visited Wiltshire College's Trowbridge campus to experience the provision for post-16 learners with SEN and LDD (Learning Difficulties and Disabilities). This visit was requested by the Committee in September 2012.

Updates on the Task Group's original recommendations

8. The Task Group can report that there has been progress with a number of its original recommendations:

Recommendation 4: "That in planning the buildings and grounds for the new care home on the former Paddocks site, a feasibility study is undertaken with respect to the following proposals..."

- i. additional land is allocated to Larkrise School to increase its current outside space;
- ii. following consultation with the school, provision of a new access route to Larkrise school running from the Hilperton Road (A361) is incorporated... [full recommendation text included in Appendix 1].”

Update: The requested feasibility study has now been completed and it identified significant issues about internal and external space at the current Larkrise site. Short-term (immediate) options are being explored with the architects, including the conversion of one part of the building into a classroom to allow it to accommodate hoists. This is to ensure appropriate progression for pupils currently on roll of the school is possible. Longer term (more than 3 or 4 years), consideration will be given to a range of options including split sites or relocation of the school; this is likely to require significant capital investment.

Recommendation 5: “That the Cabinet of Wiltshire Council gives consideration to allocating capital funding to the purchase of a suitable property to accommodate St Nicholas School’s post-16 provision, which would both allow its continuance and development and free-up space within the main school buildings.”

Update: Funding had been set aside to help St Nicholas School purchase a bungalow to accommodate its post-16 provision. Authority for the transaction from Cabinet Capital Asset Committee was obtained on 19 March 2013 and the purchase is now underway.

Work is also underway to purchase a current Wiltshire College owned building adjacent to the Chippenham campus to co-locate St Nicholas’ post-16 provision. This allows St Nicholas students to use the College’s autistic centre and some funding has been identified to purchase the property (further funding being pursued within the Council) alongside an application to the Education Funding Agency under the Demographic Growth Capital Fund to refurbish the building to meet St Nicholas’ pupils’ needs.

Further work

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

9. In its previous report to Committee, the Task Group noted that caring for a child with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) can be demanding and short-term respite care can provide vital breaks for some parents and help them to continue to care for their child or young person at home. There were (and still

are) two residential facilities in Wiltshire providing short breaks services for children and young people with SLD:

Hillcote is a ten-bedded unit in Salisbury providing residential short breaks services for children and young people aged 4 to 18 with a learning disability and complex needs. The service is provided by Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and commissioned by NHS Wiltshire.

Canon's House is an eight-bedded registered residential home in Devizes which offers short term breaks for children aged 5 to 18 with a disability and complex needs. The service is provided by the Council from a Victorian House in Devizes.

10. During its initial investigation the Task Group received anecdotal evidence that Canon's House was often operating at full capacity with a long waiting list, while Hillcote was underused. In reality, neither of these residential units operate waiting lists. The Task Group has subsequently investigated the actual usage of these two facilities with officers and considered the results of a review of Wiltshire's short break provision conducted jointly by the Council and NHS Wiltshire. The results of this review will also be considered by Wiltshire's Clinical Commissioning Group in June.
11. In addition to the Canon's House and Hillcote residential facilities, the Council provides a Family Link service which provides family-based short breaks scheme for disabled children. These are designed to give children a regular short break within a family-based setting where children are cared for in a family link carer's own home.
12. The following table summarises the proportion of overall cost (of the £1.47m) and proportion of activity (overnights) for Canon's House, Hillcote and the Family Link service. 61% of all overnight breaks are currently provided by Canons House and there is limited capacity for this to be increased. 41% of overnight breaks are provided by Hillcote. Only 16% of all overnight short breaks are currently provided through the Family Link service, whereas other local authorities provide a higher proportion through this type of model, which is the least expensive of the services to run. It should be noted that any absolute comparisons between the three services are difficult because each resource offers a different service, for example Hillcote and Family Link offer day care in addition to overnight short breaks.

	Canons	Hillcote	Family Link
Spend	51%	41%	8%
Activity	66%	18%	16%
Overnights	2663	756	663
Children receiving overnight breaks	65	21	19

13. The current model operated in Wiltshire, consisting mainly of residential unit overnight provision, primarily gives carers a break, but places less focus on increasing independence. The Task Group recognises that this is not in-keeping with the strategic direction of Wiltshire’s SEN Pathfinder project, which highlights empowerment and independence for the families and inclusion for children and young people. However, the Task Group also feels that the family-based short breaks provided by the Family Link scheme are not suitable for all children. Those with more challenging needs often require specialised rooms and equipment that residential units are more suited to providing. Responses to the survey of parent carers also clearly indicate they wanted residential unit provision to continue and cited the opportunity for children mixing with peers as a key benefit. The Task Group therefore recommends that an appropriate level of residential overnight short break provision to meet the needs of families should continue in Wiltshire **(Recommendation 1)**.
14. If there were to be any reconfiguration of short break provision in Wiltshire, the Task Group recommends that any savings identified are retained for services for children and young people with SEN/LDD and their families **(Recommendation 2)**. It also recommends that, if a reconfiguration of the service was proposed, the Committee receives data demonstrating how the new service could meet the demand for short breaks across Wiltshire and not equate to a reduction in the current provision **(Recommendation 3)**.
15. The Task Group notes that a large proportion of the available nights at short breaks residential provision is used by a small number of users. Canons House accommodated two children and young people for over 200 nights and Hillcote accommodated one child for over 100 nights. The Task Group therefore questions whether this is the most appropriate use of short break provision, as it could effectively amount to very expensive residential provision, and asks for the Cabinet Member’s response regarding this issue **(Recommendation 4)**.

	Canons	Hillcote	Family Link
Under 75 nights	61	17	17
Over 75 nights	4	4	2

16. The results of the review of short break provision show that families who do not live close to Canons House or Hillcote are less likely to use overnight short breaks. While this may in part be due to the lower cost of travel for these families, it is important that all parents are made aware of the availability of these services no matter where they live in the county. It is also noted that information about services available to these families is not currently compiled in one location online and recommended that this is an aspiration for the future. It is hoped that the implementation of Wiltshire's Support and Aspiration Pathfinder should increase awareness of the whole local offer of services for families with a child or young person with SEN/LDD. The Task Group recommends that the Committee focuses on this area in future scrutiny of the Wiltshire's Support and Aspiration Pathfinder **(Recommendation 5)**.

Beyond school for students with SEN/LDD

17. In its July 2012 report, the Task Group reported concerns voiced by Wiltshire special schools that mainstream colleges do not always have the expertise required to meet the specific needs of learners with SEN. Members also emphasised that Wiltshire students without SEN enjoy a wide range of post-16 providers to choose from and did not feel it is acceptable for students with SEN to be limited to only one option.
18. Following its report, the Task Group was invited by Wiltshire College to visit its Trowbridge campus and experience the College's provision for post-16 students with SEN/LDD. The Task Group met with the College's Vice-Principal and the Trowbridge Campus Director and then attended classes with two learning groups: Students with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), who follow the College's XLR8 learning programme, and students with Profound Learning Difficulties. Finally, members enjoyed a lunch prepared by the students. The Task Group would like to thank Wiltshire College's staff and students for their valuable time and generous hospitality during its visit to Trowbridge Campus.
19. The Task Group were pleased to hear that the Council has provided additional learning support funding for Wiltshire College's XLR8 programme and that this programme receives near-100% attendance. As a result of this funding increase, students now receive 25 hours of learning time per week spread across 5 days, up from 15/16 hours per week, which made it difficult for parents to work.
20. At present students with Profound Learning Difficulties still receive 15/16 hours per week at the College, but the Task Group is informed that this will

also increase in the near future when the Council takes control of the funding in September 2013.

21. One conclusion from members' conversations during the visit was that well-planned and well-run transitions between school and college and/or further training or employment are vital in ensuring successful outcomes for young people with SEN/LDD. The transition from school to mainstream college for students with SEN can be particularly difficult and the threat of them dropping out of education altogether is significant and can have long-term implications. The Task Group were pleased to hear College staff comment that working towards a single process for students transitioning from school to the College was the aspiration.
22. The Task Group also considered an interim report produced by Rowdeford School on a piece of 'learner voice' research currently being undertaken by the school with the help of the Council. The research project involves surveying young people with SEN, both pre- and post-16, about their experiences of transitioning from school to college, training or employment. It is attempting to find out:
 - a) How are local providers preparing young people with SEN for transitions to further education, work and adult life?
 - b) What choices are available to students aged 16+ in Wiltshire?
 - c) What is the quality of the educational experience for students aged 16 and over?
 - d) Are young adults from Wiltshire's Special Schools achieving their 'full potential' as adults and if not how could we better help them to?
 - e) What should stakeholders be doing differently?
23. The project is not complete so firm conclusions cannot be drawn, but participants identify visits to schools or colleges, work experience, meeting someone at school or college and experiencing the actual provision firsthand, as being helpful in preparing them to make the transition more comfortable and successful. When asked what could help make leaving school easier, suggestions have included meeting other students; knowing what the college teachers would be like, knowing what it would be like to be a college student; knowing more about the lessons and knowing how to get around.
24. Students and parents evidently value a structured process and early planning and preparation for students' transitions from school to college or other training. Although this appears to be improving, members feel that does is not happening consistently at present. The Task Group therefore encourage the special schools, Wiltshire College and the Council to all work together to embed a single planned and structured process for the transitions of young

people with SEN/LDD from school to further education and training **(Recommendation 6)**.

25. The Task Group further encourages Wiltshire's special schools and Wiltshire College to work together and share the expertise built up in the special schools, particularly in regards to provision for children and young people with Severe or Profound Learning Difficulties **(Recommendation 7)**.

Healthcare in special schools

26. In its September 2012 report, the Task Group made a number of recommendations regarding the provision of healthcare for students in special schools. During this second leg of work, the Task Group have received evidence that due to changes to national rules, the Council now needs to 'spot purchase' places for individual children and young people with complex healthcare needs (rather than at the moment providing schools with funding for a certain number of planned places). This could mean that when a child with disabilities/complex health needs leaves a school, specially trained staff such as Teaching Assistants may need to move on, meaning the loss of that person's understanding of complex health needs and skills that could be useful for future students. These changes could therefore potentially create a lack of stability in a school's workforce that has implications for the amount of time that health will need to spend on ensuring that staff are trained to meet complex health needs. Officers have reported that has been raised by the Council with local MPs during a recent period of national consultation. The Task Group wish to bring this concern to the Committee's attention.

Proposals

27. That the Committee endorses the following recommendations and refers them to the relevant executive bodies for response:

The Task Group recommends that:

- 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;**
- 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;
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;
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);

Special Schools and Post-16 SEN Task Group

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Executive response to the Final Report of the Special School and Post-16 SEN Task Group – September 2012

Background documents

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

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

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the Executive's response to the final report of the Special Schools Post-16 SEN Task Group (August 2012).

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.

Task Group Recommendations and Executive Responses

Predicting and meeting future demand for SEN provision

Task Group recommendation:

1. The Task Group believes it is of the utmost importance that Wiltshire plans and develops now for the future needs of those with SEN. This is of particular importance because of the capacity issues being faced by Larkrise School and St Nicholas School. The Task Group understands that no overall increase in demand for places in special schools is expected. Given the population growth projected in Wiltshire and academic evidence suggesting that the numbers of children with ASDs and SLDs are increasing nationally, the Task Group is concerned that demand for special school places may in fact increase in the future.

The Group therefore recommends that the following work is undertaken and brought back to Committee:

- an analysis projecting future demand for SEN in Wiltshire based on the Core Strategy
- a strategic plan detailing how the projected need will be met (including post-16 education)

Executive response:

A review of Special Educational Needs was conducted in 2010 which included a data analysis over a five year period showing that there was no significant increase in the numbers of children with SLD/PMLD in Wiltshire. The predicted numbers from this analysis show that the situation is relatively stable. If there is growth in the population in some areas of Wiltshire there maybe a corresponding slight increase in the numbers of children with special educational needs but it is difficult to predict future trends in population growth. The academic evidence referred to by the Task Group recognised that “consistency in definitions of need make longer term service planning and development difficult”. This academic evidence was designed to provide teachers and parents with “educational resources to enable practioners to formulate an effective teaching and learning package for children and young people with complex needs in the classroom”.

The figures for Wiltshire school population 2011 are:-

Table 1. Wiltshire school population for 2011 extracted from the Wiltshire Population 2011 booklet

Type of school	Number of schools	Pre-school settings	NOR<5 in the school	5-10	11-15	Post 16	Total
Primary	199	312	5,155	29,048	10		34,525
Secondary	29			5	25,087	4,696	29,788
Special	6		12	88	353	52	504
YPSS	1				74	1	75
All	235	312	5,167	29,141	25,524	4,749	64,892

The latest population data for Wiltshire:

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2021	2026
Total population	461,480	464,310	466,950	469,820	472,780	475,870	492,630	510,300

The latest young people (0-18) population increase:

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2021	2026
No. of young people	101,510	101,340	101,020	101,030	100,710	100,440	100,810	101,240

There are around 20,000 more houses that have to be built throughout Wiltshire and this will bring approximately 6,200 primary aged children and 4,400 more secondary aged children by 2026.

Therefore there could be 111,840 young people in Wiltshire aged 0 – 18 in 2026. Not all of the young people are in Wiltshire schools i.e. those in colleges or employment post 16 and the 0-4 year olds in pre-schools.

Approximately 64% of 0 – 18 year olds are in Wiltshire schools. Therefore the school aged population could be 71,577 by 2026.

If the proportion of students is the same for each cohort and therefore the total population then there could be 558 young people to be expected in our special schools. This is an increase in the present population of 54 young people by 2026. The Special Educational Needs Team and School Strategic Planning team will have to plan for this increase if the assessment and allocation of out of county placements are to stay the same

Discussions with the Army suggest that the population is at about 12,000 troops at the present in Wiltshire. This figure will increase over the next few years but with the army downsizing the final figure will remain at about the figure it is today – about 12,000.

To help predict numbers of learners with SEN moving out of special schools and help Wiltshire meet future demands a Transitions Development Group has been established that will co-ordinate and meet three times this year. The group is well attended by the Special Schools, College (both mainstream and specialist) and associated partners (Integrated Youth Service colleagues, and representatives from examination boards). By bringing these groups together we are ensuring that future SEN demands are met and that a co-ordinated approach to curriculum mapping for transitions between schools and college for Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD) is achieved.

To meet further the future demand of our post 16 LLDD young people we have co-ordinated and supported financially further development of link provision between all our special schools and Wiltshire College. This ensures that the College is ready to meet each individual's learning and support needs before they make their transition from Special School to College.

Recent financial developments announced by the Department for Education for 2013 to 2014 include new formula funding methods for all maintained schools including special schools. These arrangements are currently subject to consultation with Schools Forum and all schools in Wiltshire and it is too early to report on the final decisions. On 3 September the Government issued draft legislation on the reform of provision for children and young people with SEN. This legislation and the new funding arrangements include duties related to a new

commissioning arrangement with special schools; it will no longer be possible to secure a fixed number of places for Wiltshire pupils in any maintained or academy special school located in Wiltshire. Any potential investment and joint strategic planning will have to be considered in the context of this new legislation.

In addition, Wiltshire Local Authority has pathfinder status trialling the Department for Education's new approach to assessment and financial arrangements for children and young people with special educational needs. This will have implications for the admission and placement of children in our Special Schools. The trial is currently underway.

Once the above implications and consultations have concluded a review will be undertaken and shared with service providers and the Task Group.

Healthcare in Wiltshire's special schools

Task Group recommendation:

2. That the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and, if appropriate, Wiltshire PCT bring a report to the Committee responding to the concerns raised by Wiltshire's special schools in relation to joint agency provision for pupils who have a specific health care need. This report should set out how the concerns raised by the school will be addressed.

Executive response:

Over the last year, the local authority's SEN Team and Wiltshire Community Health Services have worked together, in consultation with special schools, to update the document on 'Including children and young people with complex health needs in early years settings and schools'. This document was signed off by the Disability/SEN Strategy Group (a sub group of Wiltshire's Children's Trust) in May. There will be an update to the Group on how the protocol is working in practice later this year.

Following on from this work, it has now been agreed that the PCT's Children's Commissioning Lead, Julia Cramp, and children's health providers, will be invited three times a year to the regular meetings that the local authority's SEN Team hold with the Headteachers of special schools. This will provide a forum for concerns to be discussed and resolved at a strategic level.

Wiltshire is one of 20 Pathfinders for the 2011 SEN/Disability Green Paper proposing the use of a single assessment process and plan for health, education and social care and a new integrated team will start working together this month to test new paperwork and processes for improving support for children and families. It is proposed that a report is brought to the Committee once the team has completed its first three months of operation.

Task Group recommendation:

3. That the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Wiltshire PCT enter a dialogue with respect to the provision of nursing care in special schools and a report is brought to the Committee setting out the funding agreements currently in place for its provision and how they compare with equivalent funding agreements in Wiltshire's statistical neighbours.

Executive response:

The Service Director for Children's Commissioning and Performance is also the PCT's children's commissioning lead. It is recognised that special schools are now dealing with an

increasing number of children and young people with complex health needs and that special schools need effective health support in managing these children and young people. There is no data available to specifically compare funding for health care in special schools as health support for special schools is provided by a combination of Children's Community Nurses and Public Health School Nurses who only undertake a proportion of their work in special schools.

It is proposed that the Service Director for Children's Commissioning and Performance uses the children's commissioners' network across the South West to look at nursing support for special schools and brings a report to a future meeting of the Committee.

Larkrise School, Trowbridge

Task Group recommendation:

4. That in planning the buildings and grounds for the new care home on the former Paddocks site, a feasibility study is undertaken with respect to the following proposals, which would benefit the education and welfare of pupils at Larkrise Special School:

- 1) additional land is allocated to Larkrise school to increase its current outside space;
- 2) following consultation with the school, provision of a new access route to Larkrise school running from the Hilperton Road (A361) is incorporated, which would:
 - ease the severe traffic congestion experienced in the residential area during pick-up and drop-off times at Larkrise School and Paxcroft Primary School;
 - decrease the potential danger of accidents resulting from congestion currently experienced within the school's car park;
 - free-up space at the front of the school (the existing access route) for possible development and expansion of the school.

Executive response:

The School Strategic Planning Team has had some initial discussions with Larkrise School Headteacher and the Service Director for Adult Social Care and Housing Strategy. The discussions centred on the possibility of additional land being acquired from the adjacent proposed adult care home in order that the footprint of Larkrise School could be increased. Any additional land could increase the outdoor area for the school or allow further building development of the school, dependent on suitable planning permission. The school has a number of temporary buildings that could be considered not fit for purpose. The School Strategic Planning Team has identified a sum of money from 2012/13 New Deal for Schools (NDS) to conduct a feasibility study into the proposed suggestions. This work could start immediately.

St Nicholas School, Chippenham

Task Group recommendation:

5. That the Cabinet of Wiltshire Council gives consideration to allocating capital funding to the purchase of a suitable property to accommodate St Nicholas School's post-16 provision, which would both allow its continuance and development and free-up space within the main school buildings.

Executive response:

The majority of learners 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 can 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 and Trowbridge campus sites of Wiltshire College. From Sept 2012 this programme will also run at the Chippenham Campus, making it more accessible to young people.

St Nicholas School are currently through to the finals of a national competition to win a house worth £250,000. The vote finishes on 20 September. Members are asked to support this initiative by voting via this website www.40.persimmonhomes.com/vote?charities=S-Z

In addition there could be capital funds allocated in 2012/13 to increasing the size of St Nicholas School to support their ambition of allocating additional space for post-16 provision. These plans could free-up space within the main school buildings. There needs to be a full needs assessment and feasibility study to secure what is needed and for what purpose. Officers are currently meeting with the Head Teacher to understand the building needs so that feasibility studies can be conducted.

Rowdeford School, Rowde

Task Group recommendation:

6. That the Cabinet Member for Children's Services notes the Task Group's concerns with respect to disabled access at Rowdeford School and provides the Committee with a response.

Executive response:

The concerns have been noted. Under the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) all schools are asked to make reasonable adjustments to their accommodation and provision for children and young people with disabilities. The school will be asked to consider creative solutions to the use of their buildings to accommodate any children and young people that have a physical disability. Placement of all children and young people placed at the school is undertaken with the school and with regard to the particular needs of the young person.

Task Group recommendation:

7. That the Cabinet of Wiltshire Council gives consideration to allocating capital funding to the development of Rowdeford School's proposed Eco-Learning Centre for the provision of post-16 education for those with SEN.

Executive response:

Wiltshire College has offered programmes for learners with LLDD for many years, working

with local schools as well as ISCs. Programmes are offered at Trowbridge, Salisbury and Chippenham campus and include 5-day per week provision. Rowdeford School has worked with Wiltshire College for many years on pre-16 link provision to support the transition of learners at 16.

There are no plans to support this development from the School Strategic Planning team as this is considered a school development not a capacity, basic need or condition issue.

Downland School and Springfield Academy

Task Group recommendation:

8. That the Council should ensure Wiltshire's current BSD special school provision is correctly configured and that, if it is not, creative solutions be found.

Executive response:

The Task Group may be aware that Springfields School has achieved Academy status, an outstanding school and is effectively not under the direct management of the local authority. Downland School is a local authority maintained school and has recently been the subject of an OfSTED inspection and was judged as good with some outstanding features. The local authority through its Special Educational Needs (SEN) officers continues to work with both schools to ensure that provision for children and young people with BESD is good. Through the work of the SEN officers discussions will be extended to both Governing bodies to explore opportunities for more collaborative approaches to enhance the existing good provision for children and young people with BESD

Residential provision for children and young people with SLD

Task Group recommendation:

9. That the Committee receives figures showing the Council's total expenditure on out-of-county residential placements for children and young people with SLD in recent years, plus estimates of the comparative costs of developing and running an equivalent in-county facility

Executive response:

The Council has already begun work analysing the costs of out-of-county provision. Further analysis will be produced including the relative contributions received from the health authority and social care within the local authority. This information will be available to the Task Group and further discussions held to enable a comparison to be made of the costs of in-county provision and out-of-county provision.

Task Group recommendation:

10. That a report is brought to the Committee detailing the usage of and waiting times for Canon's House and Hillcote respite facilities. The Task Group notes that a Council review of short breaks is currently underway and requests that details of this be included in the response.

Executive response:

A joint review of overnight short breaks started earlier this year, led by the Service Director for Children's Commissioning and Performance (a post jointly funded by the PCT). The review is due to report to the Children's Trust Commissioning Executive and to the PCT's Clinical Commissioning Committee in October. This review has looked at short breaks provision at the two residential units in the County - Canon's House (run by the local authority) and Hillcote (run by Wiltshire Community Health services), and also at the Council's Family Link Scheme (short break fostering). The review has considered the numbers of children using overnight short break provision, the number of nights' support provided and costs of provision. Officers have also worked with Wiltshire Parent Carers Council to seek parents' views on how well existing provision meets their needs. There is no waiting list for Canon's House and Hillcote and access is based on need assessed by the local authority's Children's Disabilities Team.

A report can be provided to the Committee at its November meeting

Resource Bases (SLCs)

Task Group recommendation

11. That a report detailing what programmes are in place for the identification of Speech and Language problems in school aged children, how the Council measures its performance in this area and how it compares with other local authorities

Executive response:

The Speech and Language Service is jointly commissioned by the LA and NHS, performance is regularly monitored and outcomes are part of the specification agreed at the time of the original tender two years ago. The Trust Board receives regular updates on performance.

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; and**
2. **Agree any further action as appropriate.**

Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director

Appendices

None

Background documents

Final Report of the Special Schools Post-16 SEN Scrutiny Task Group.

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