

Schools Forum

23rd June 2022

SEND & Inclusion Change Programme

Recommendations

- That the Forum comments upon progress of the SEND & Inclusion Change Programme

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The report provides an update on activity on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) & Inclusion Change Programme since the previous report to School Forum and in particular an update on the long term financial forecast.

2. SEND & Inclusion Change Programme

- 2.1 The vision for SEND in Warwickshire is that all our children and young people lead a fulfilling life and are part of their community.
- 2.2 Through the SEND & Inclusion Change Programme we will work together to:
- Improve outcomes for our children and young people with SEND
 - Take decisions in a clear, fair and transparent way
 - Ensure that systems are sustainable, so that we are working within our allocated funding
 - Secure education, employment and training for our young people with SEND (age 16-25)
- 2.3 The programme itself is funded by Warwickshire County Council. Funding to continue the programme into 2022/23 has been agreed through the Council budget process.

3. Summary update on Programme and Projects

- 3.1 The project approach adopted by Warwickshire County Council is:
- a) Project to have initial approval of a Project Proposal Document (PPD)
 - b) A full business case (FBC) is then developed including mapping of the 'as-is' position and 'to-be' position, along with the plan to move from one to the other and confirmation of the benefits

- c) Projects go live for implementation
- d) Project closed and lessons learnt report

3.2 Projects were separated into three phases. Phase 2 projects are now underway. The overall status report is below:

OCT 20	NOV 20	DEC 20	JAN 21	FEB 21	MAR 21	APR 21	MAY 21	JUNE 21	JULY 21	Aug 21	Sept 21	Oct 21	Nov 2021	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	April 22
Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red

	Compromised	At risk of compromise	On Target	To be agreed	Completed	Total
PPD		1	1			2
FBC		3	3			6
LIVE	1	4	2			7
Closed					5	5
Paused			2			2
Total	1	8	8	0	5	22

3.3 The following projects are highlighted:

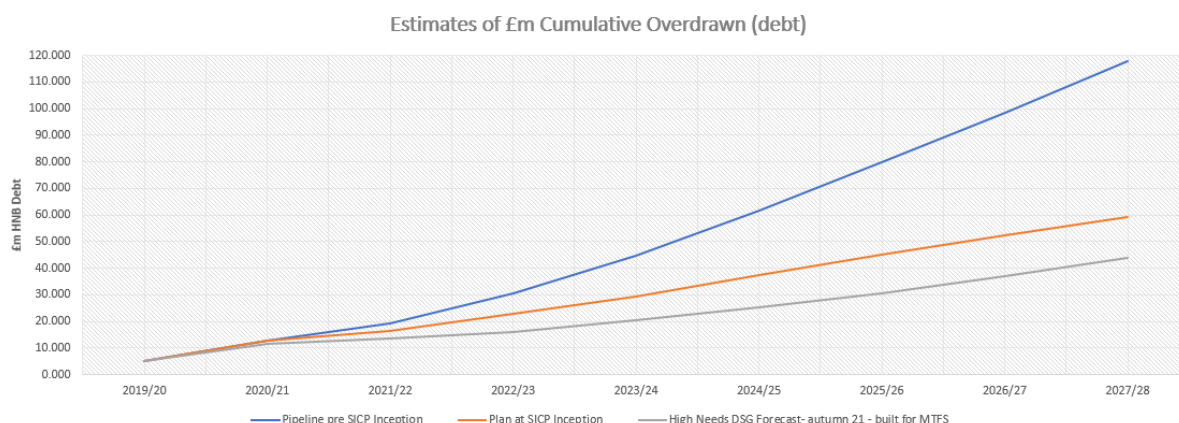
- a) The Warwickshire Academy (a new special school) is now open.
- b) The Inclusion Framework trial, seeking to intervene earlier and avoid barriers created through traded services, is underway with 20 schools taking part.
- c) The Schools Top-Up Funding trial is underway (see separate paper).
- d) The SEND Capital Strategy project is in place recommending further resourced provision and expansion of special schools in areas of population growth.
- e) The Workforce Development project has transferred to the Written Statement of Action workstream.
- f) The EHC plan Annual Reviews project is set to start.

4. Overall financial impact so far

4.1 Quality and performance measures are reported to the SEND Partnership and the SEND & inclusion Change Programme Board. This report focuses on financial impact under the objective to achieve financial sustainability.

4.2 As set out in the DSG monitoring report, High Needs Block outturn overspent by £2.130m in 2021/22. This is less than the forecast £11.352m forecast at the inception of SEND Change Programme and indeed less than 2020/21 (Outturn £8.610m). However, it is still an overspend and significant financial pressure remains in this area. The detail on areas of overspend against budget is set out in the DSG outturn report (Item 8 on this Schools Forum Agenda).

- 4.3 Being precise on cause and effect remains a barrier until all financial information is stored in the Synergy system alongside activity and profile data. Additional funding through the High Needs Block and the 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block have clearly been significant factors, along with the Change Programme, in reducing spend against the forecast.
- 4.4 In light of the latest figures, the high level cumulative overspend forecast has been updated. This is demonstrated in the graph below. The blue line represents the cumulative overspend forecast in May 2020 had there been no intervention. The orange line shows the predicted overspend based upon SEND & Inclusion Change Programme interventions, again set at May 2020. The grey line shows the latest forecast.



- 4.5 The latest forecast shows that a better outlook compared to May 2020, although still a cumulative overspend of over £40m by 2027/28.
- 4.6 Based on latest data available, there remains a clear direction of travel on key factors affecting spend:
- a) **More children and young people with SEND are being supported in mainstream settings.** 1,571 children were supported in mainstream settings at January 2022 compared to 1,430 the year before. This is also higher than the 2017 level (1,475) and higher than the number placed in state-funded special schools. New guidance to schools on the graduated approach was launched in October 2021.
 - b) **More children are supported in state-funded specialist settings.** This was expected due to population growth, increased complexity of need and less use of independent specialist provision (ISP). 1,563 children are supported in state-funded specialist setting in January 2022 compared to 1,544 in 2021.
 - c) **The numbers of children and young people attending independent specialist provision (ISP) has reduced slightly** from 253 in January 2021 to 250 in January

2022. Comparative benchmarking for 2022 shows that Warwickshire is now in line with the national average at 5.2% and below statistical neighbours (5.3%). Warwickshire was at 10.6% in 2015. It has been Warwickshire's aim to reduce the proportion of learners in ISP to be in line with national levels. This has been achieved in 2022.

- d) **The number of children attending specialist resourced provision is increasing.** Four new resourced provisions and partnerships in September, creating 142 places across the County. Utilisation is up from 69 places this time last year to 109. These provisions allow for specialist provision in mainstream settings delivering positive outcomes, value for money and freeing up places in specialist settings. Two new resourced provisions are proposed for September subject to DfE approval.
- e) **The number of new EHC plans issued has reduced.** The number of new EHC plans issued in the calendar year 2021 was 492 compared with 583 the previous year. This trend is contrary to national and statistical neighbours.
- f) **The number of EHC plans in pre-school years remains low.** The project is working to identify the appropriate time for requesting a EHC needs assessment in early years as a form of early intervention. Most pre-school children with an EHC plan have it issued in the summer term prior to Reception year.
- g) **The unit price of residential placements has reduced but the number of placements has increased.**
- h) **New cost centres have been created to monitor spend on alternative provision.** This allows for better monitoring of spend in this area from April 2021. New guidance is also being developed in this area. Costs in this area have significantly reduced.
- i) **The number of supported internships has significantly reduced as a result of Covid-19 to 26.** This has had a significant impact on the financial forecast.

5. Other pressures on the High Needs Block

- 5.1 Special schools have not received additional funding that mainstream schools have received through the Schools Supplementary Grant. Applying the same formula that mainstream schools have received additional funding for would add approximately £778k to the current forecast. The SEND & Inclusion Change Programme Board is considering this proposal. In addition, the ESFA guidance has changed resulting the local authority having to pay for the Teachers Pay and Pension Grant. The additional contribution required is £660 per place.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 That the Forum comments upon progress of the SEND & Inclusion Change Programme

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