

Agenda Item 9.

TITLE	Review of SEND Ofsted inspection
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 June 2019
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY To improve the Health, Education and life opportunities for children living in the Wokingham area
RECOMMENDATION That the report be noted
SUMMARY OF REPORT This report highlighted the recent Ofsted/CQC report into SEND services with Wokingham and outlines the actions Children's Services are undertaking.

Background

1. In March 2019 Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) undertook a detailed inspection of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services managed and run by Wokingham Borough Council and local Health Services. The purpose of the inspection was to judge and assess the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. It was a well managed and fair inspection that has provided both Health and the Local Authority good learning from the inspection process.
2. The inspection identified a number of areas needing improvement and have required the Local Authority and the local Clinical Commissioning Group to prepare a written statement of action aimed at addressing identified areas of significant weaknesses. These weaknesses are identified in the attached Ofsted letter.
3. This report highlights the action that the Directorate and the CCG are intending to take to address the deficits identified in the inspectors' letter.

Analysis of Issues

4. The inspection of SEND services is a national Ofsted initiative aimed at raising standards in the provision of services to vulnerable children. In Wokingham there are a number of areas that need to be addressed these include:
 - the lack of a clearly communicated co-produced strategy and accompanying action plans that are shared and understood across education, health and care in the local area and sharply focused on improving the outcomes of children and young people with SEND
 - the timeliness and quality of Education, Health and Care (EHP) plans
 - the lack of co-production at a strategic level to inform effective co-production at all levels
 - the quality of management information to inform accurate evaluation and energise service improvement across the local area
 - the lack of well-coordinated and effectively joined-up work across education, health and social care
 - the underdeveloped pathway to enable young people with SEND to make a successful transition to adulthood.
5. In order to deliver the improvements identified in the letter of required action the Local Authority, CCG, Health Providers and other partners including Reach (now known as SEND voices) will establish a SEND improvement Board to oversee and deliver identified required improvements. This fits to a wider SEND agenda the Council must address. Principally there is insufficient resource available locally to meet current and projected demand. The consequence of which has resulted in a significant over commitment of available education funding

specifically within the High Needs Block. The overspend in this area for 18/19 is £2.1 million.

6. There is in place detailed plans to improve provision. Including:

- The development and implementation of a SEND strategy. This has recently been subject to extensive consultation with partners young people and parents and careers. The outcome of this will form the basis of new arrangements to deliver fit for future purpose SEND provision,
- Detailed discussions are ongoing with schools to amend and augment current resource base provision. It is intended to bring new provision into place over the summer months,
- Agreements have been reach to expand provision and Addington School. Addington is a Wokingham Council maintained school with an outstanding Ofsted judgement. This will allow for an additional xx placements to be made available.
- Discussions are ongoing with other local Councils and the DfE to build a new free school specialising in the provision of SEND places. This will require a new build and as a consequence take some time to deliver.
- Northern House School is a local academy that earlier this year was judged to be inadequate. The Council is working with the school and the associated trust to improve provision. It is an import resource as it current provides a significant number of placements for Wokingham children. It is subject ongoing Ofsted monitoring but has shown a series of recent improvements.
- In addition to the above the Council in setting the budget for this year and beyond has significantly improved provision. This will allow for the appointment of much needed SEN case officers who once in post will substantially improve the level of ongoing support for children and their families.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context

7. There is a significant financial over commitment within the High Needs Block of the schools budget. This has been an ongoing issues for the Council. The implementation of the actions required arising from the inspection report will in the short term be significant. Work is ongoing to identify the extent of this. In the medium term the increase in in-house provision will significantly reduce the need for expensive out of area placements resulting in a reduction in the overspends within the High Needs Block.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)			
Next Financial Year (Year 2)			
Following Financial Year (Year 3)			

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)
N/A

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers

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