

# EDUCATION SEND GROUP REPORT TO FORUM FOR PRESENTATION AT FORUM ON 12 November 2019

**Date of meeting: 10 October 2019 - Brief Summary of Items Discussed**

- **SEND Funding (Steve Fenton)** – Financial monitoring showed a budget deficit of £5.6m, with increased expenditure on independent school fees and top-up fees. This is likely to increase in the next few months. The Government has promised an additional £700m High Needs funding nationally, with an expected £2.2m for Solihull. However this will not go far enough to resolve the problem. In response, the LA is producing a 3-5 year high level Recovery Plan, into which EdSEND and Forum will have input. Members raised a number of questions and concerns including the importance of SEND pupils being in the most appropriate provision; the importance of having a consistent Annual Review process; the need for regular monitoring of independent out-of-borough provision in terms of both quality and value for money; the need for schools to be supportive of requests for Reasonable Adjustments; the importance of adequate support for 'K' children, the need for the 0-25 SEND Strategy to be updated and an on-going requirement for the LA to lobby Government for more money.
- **Education Psychology Service (Halit Hulusi)** – There has been 59% uptake for the traded service and there is capacity to take on additional schools. EPs are now in schools, working with teachers, children and families and working collaboratively with SISS on High Needs behaviour. A formal Annual Review process is now in place, paperwork will shortly be published on the Local Offer and several Reviews have taken place. Work is on-going to identify young people who could move back into appropriate Solihull provision from their current external placements. An all-day training session regarding School Avoiders was planned for 14 October. All schools were invited to send two staff members. HH is pursuing extending the EP Service to include Early Years.
- **Head of Service Update (Ann Lowe)** – Notifications around Part-time Timetables are now coming in and analysis of these, together with attendance data for external independent provision, will be brought to the next meeting. There was discussion around the need for the Local Authority to put a formal response in place for occasions when an external independent provision goes into special measures. A leaflet is being produced which will accompany letters to parents explaining the process when a request for assessment or EHCP has been approved or turned down.
- **SISS Update (Paula Thompson)** – The draft Inclusion Charter is now out for final consultation and is expected to be finalised by December. A cross-service group is developing an Equipment Policy for use in schools, settings and Adult Services. Similarly, a group is developing a Local Authority Manual Handling Policy for Childrens' and Adult Services; this is expected to be in place by Easter 2020. Following the collapse of the Person-centred Planning pilot, those schools and LA staff who have completed the pilot have completed case studies and identified next steps for 2019-20. Two Inclusion Support Practitioners are now working in schools alongside a specialist teacher and EP and feedback has been very positive. The TAC Panel has now started and EY work is going through that. Free AET training for schools and EY will take place again this year. An Early Years Inclusion Fund report will be available for the next meeting.

LM/AMc  
17.10.19