

SCHOOLS FORUM

Newsletter

Summarising business undertaken at a meeting held on 19th May 2021

Assistant Director's Items

Reshaping Education - Tim Browne presented a PowerPoint explaining the key issues driving the need for change - the outcomes of children and young people, the changing role of the Local Authority, set against reduced funding and an evolving and increasingly diverse school system. Following engagement with the education community through the Reshaping Education Discussion Paper, a formal Consultation with Local Authority staff about the proposed new structure, would run until 28 May. The structure is based on five key service areas - Commissioning for Learning (including Education Commissioning, School Funding, School Transport and an Admin and Data Hub) - Education Outcomes and Intervention (the School Improvement function, Virtual School, Music Service and Safeguarding) - SEND Service (which has already undergone a re-organisation) - Children and Young Persons' Commissioning and a new Inclusion Service (to provide additional support and co-ordination function around children at risk of falling out of the system, working with settings to support children with additional needs and ensure all core statutory functions are delivered, eg. EHE, exclusions, AP etc.) It is proposed that new ways of working will start from 1 July.

2020-21 Financial Out-turn

Stuart McHale confirmed the final 2020-21 out-turn to be a deficit of £3.1m, which included the application of £261k Covid support funding. The accumulated figure is a deficit of £9m.

High Needs Recovery Plan Update

High level Recovery Plan work is on-going, with a follow-up report to Full Cabinet planned for later in the year. Additional finance and accountability resource is being added to focus specifically on the Dedicated Schools Grant and the High Needs Block financial model. Eight major projects to increase in-borough capacity are taking shape.

SEND Improvement Journey

Tim Browne presented a paper detailing the work taking shape in support of the High Needs Recovery Plan. This includes: improving mainstream inclusion, increasing LA capacity, timely assessment and review, increasing specialist provision, spending money to make the most impact, targeting support for children and improving parental confidence.

New Commissioning Arrangements for Independent High Needs Placements

Significant progress has been made with the contractual arrangements with independent and private providers. Contracts have been drawn up and issued to current providers, over 50% of which have already been signed and returned. Independent Placement Agreements are being drawn up for individual pupils and the team is working with providers to implement these. Work is starting around contract management and quality assurance of placements through school self-assessments, Annual Review returns and parental feedback, to establish which schools provide the best outcomes and best value.

For more information please contact us at: schoolsforum@solihull.gov.uk or [click here](#) to visit our webpage.