

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Briefing for Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee Tuesday 19th March 2013

UPDATE FROM THE SEN EXECUTIVE WORKING PARTY

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1. Summary

1.1 This report provides Members with an update following the meeting of the Executive Member Officer Working Party for Special Educational Needs held on 28th February 2013.

2. THE BRIEFING

2.1 A number of areas were considered as part of the meeting:

Special Education Needs Transport

2.2 Members considered a report which outlined the current transport provision for children and young people with special educational needs in the Borough and work that was being undertaken around the future development of the service.

2.3 It was noted that the SEN Transport Service was working to develop a menu of transport solutions to promote choice, develop independence and align their work with that of the SEN Pathfinder into the future. This included travel training to support pupils to become independent travellers, potential structure changes to the SEN and Adult Transport Teams, and consideration of the type of transport services Bromley would provide into the future.

SEN Pathfinder Update – Education, Health and Care Plans

2.4 Members considered a report outlining progress with the SEN Pathfinder, developed in partnership with London Borough of Bexley to test areas within the Children and Families Bill, and providing further information on Education, Health and Care plans, which were a key component of the new SEN and Disability reform agenda.

2.5 The SEN Pathfinder had tested the development and application of Education, Health and Care Plans for children and young people with complex needs, and in December 2012, the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley were notified that further funding had been granted to take the SEN Pathfinder work forward until September 2014, in line with the timescales for the implementation of the new SEN reforms. During this additional phase of the SEN Pathfinder, Education, Health and Care Plans would be scaled up for full implementation for all

new children and young people by September 2013, linking with the current statutory SEN legislative processes around statements which would remain in place until September 2014.

SEN and Disability Strategy – Specialist Placements In and Out of Borough Settings – Analysis of Need

- 2.6 Members considered a report outlining in and out of Borough pupil placements and providing an analysis of needs and information to support forward planning.
- 2.7 The future strategy for special educational needs was to ensure that local, high quality and cost effective provision was available across the Borough to support children and young people to access pupil placements within their local communities. To enable this, work had been undertaken to develop a wider range of in Borough pupil placements including recent consultation on plans to expand Riverside School to provide places for 8 pupils per year with an autism specific curriculum, and to provide an additional 16 places per year at Glebe School for children with complex learning needs including complex social and communication needs.

SEN and Disability Strategy – Education Funding Reform Implications

- 2.8 Members considered a report which provided an update on the Education Funding Reform implementation and implications for Statements and children with special educational needs in mainstream schools in Bromley.
- 2.9 The Department for Education aimed to simplify the local funding arrangements for 2013/14 and 2014/15 and to introduce a new approach to funding special educational needs that would help to improve transparency, quality and choice for young people and their families.
- 2.10 From 2013/14 the Dedicated Schools Grant funding would be divided into three separate blocks comprising High Needs, Early Years and Schools. The Schools Block would contain Special Educational Needs funds for lower level statement, Action and Action Plus funds. Statements with funding under £6k would not attract direct funding but schools would be required to create a notional special educational needs budget and allocate funds from within their school budget. Statements with a Matrix value above £6k would also be funded by schools but 'top-up' funding would be provided to cover any costs over £6k.

Commissioning of Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy for Pupils in Bromley Schools

- 2.11 Members considered a report which outlined the commissioned provision of speech and language therapy and occupational therapy to Bromley school settings.
- 2.12 The Local Authority provided speech and language therapy and occupational therapy provision for pupils in special schools and schools with unit provision in partnership with Bromley Primary Care Trust. The current Local Authority contract was due to end in July 2013 and following consideration of the report by the Education PDS Committee, the Portfolio Holder had agreed that an exemption be made to competitive tendering to award a new one year contract to Bromley Healthcare, the current commissioned provider for both contracts, to allow the respective London Borough of Bromley and Primary Care Trust contracts to be aligned to enable joint commissioning arrangements to be explored following a review of the legislative frameworks and clarification of funding responsibilities.