



Cabinet (Resources) Panel

8 July 2014

Report title	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Reform Grant	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Val Gibson Children and Families	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Sarah Norman - Community	
Originating service	Health and Wellbeing	
Accountable employee(s)	Kathy Roper	Disabilities Commissioning Team Manger
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Report to be/has been considered by	N/A	

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

1. Approves the expenditure of £188,000 to be funded from the SEND Reform Grant to fund the Implementation of the Children and Families Act 2014 in relation to disabled children.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Children and Families Bill 2013 included proposals to reform provision for children and young people with special educational needs or with disabilities (SEND). Draft clauses regarding SEND provision were published in September 2012, followed in February 2013 by the Children and Families Bill the draft regulations and the draft Code of Practice. The Children and Families Act became statute in March 2014
- 1.2 The Department for Education (DfE) has allocated funds to each local authority as part of the SEND Reform Grant. Wolverhampton was allocated a total of £423,000 (£75,000 in 2013/14 and £348,000 in 2014/15) to support the implementation.
- 1.3 The implementation of the SEND reforms is being corporately reported as a single programme with four district work streams, these are: schools funding reforms and the schools local offer, local offer, personalisation and education health and care plans (EHCP).
- 1.4 A team from the DfE visited Wolverhampton City Council on 27 January 2014. A subsequent letter from DfE stated that “We are impressed with the amount of progress you’ve made and the plans you have in place for implementing the reforms.”

2.0 Current Situation

- 2.1 The delivery of the co-produced local offer is being overseen by the Local Offer Partnership Board. A parents’ advisory board and a young people’s advisory board have been established to ensure that the local offer is co-produced.
- 2.2 A pilot project is being established to support the development of personalisation. The focus will be on short breaks, and families who are currently part of the Education Health and Care Plans pilots will be approached to participate.
- 2.3 A significant amount of work has been done to develop and pilot Education Health and Care plans (EHCP) and the ‘one page record’ which is similar to person centred planning techniques. Following discussions on 27 January 2014 it is evident that the government is committed to the conversion of statements to EHCP being completed in the shortest possible period of time. At present it is anticipated that the conversions will need to be completed over a three year period. Feedback from the DfE recognises that this is a significant challenge for the Council with the current team’s capacity.
- 2.4 Success to date has been enhanced by having access to the additional funds made available by the DfE. These have enabled increased involvement by parents and young people, increased capacity in the project team to start work on the local offer, and funded the required IT platform.

3.0 Financial Implications

- 3.1 Wolverhampton has been awarded a total of £423,000 of SEND Reform Grant, £75,000 in 2013/14 and £348,000 in 2014/15. Recognising the current pressure on Council

budgets the SEND project group has completed a scoping exercise to identify the most effective way to allocate some of the grant so that the council is able to implement the statutory reforms.

- 3.2 Due to the urgent nature of some of the implementation plan, an Individual Executive Decision was sought in May 2014 to spend £95,000.
- 3.3 Table 1 below outlines the remaining activities that need to be undertaken to successfully implement the programme in the required timescales which total £188,000.

Table 1

Activity	Recommended Budget £000
SEND implementation	
3 x (ft) SEN Education Officers (@ £41,000 each incl. on costs) for 12 months for statement conversions	123
1 x (ft) Parent participation assistant for 12 months to work across PPS and SNEYS	21
Engagement of disabled young people and BME groups	15
Personal Budgets pilot for families of disabled children	20
Marketing and publicity	9
Total	188

- 3.4 The remaining grant balance of £140,000 has been included in the as a one off saving in the June Budget Report to Cabinet.
- 3.5 This grant was previously not included in the approved budget; this expenditure will therefore have no net impact on the council's General Fund budget.
[AS/13062014/B]

4.0 Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are legal implications associated with this report as there are statutory responsibilities on the local authority to implement the key elements of the Children and Families Act 2014
[RB/08062014/G]

5.0 Equalities Implications

- 5.1 There are equalities implications associated with this work as it relates to changes to services for disabled children and their families. An initial equalities screening has been completed.

6.0 Environmental Implications

- 6.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report

8.0 Human Resources Implications

- 8.1 There are human resource implications associated with this report as the Reform Grant is being used to increase staffing capacity in the Parent Partnership service to support co-production of the local offer. The additional posts have role profile allocations and grades in line with the service's existing establishment. All relevant human resources processes will be followed to establish and fill the posts.

9.0 Corporate Landlord Implications

- 9.1 There are no corporate landlord implications associated with this report

10.0 Schedule of Background Papers

- 10.1 There are no background papers