



Cabinet (Resources) Panel

21 October 2014

Report title	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Implementation 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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Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

1. Approve the expenditure of £200,000 in 2014/15 and £160,000 in 2015/16 to be funded from the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities implementation 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 has allocated funds to each local authority as part of the SEND implementation grant. The purpose of the grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them. Wolverhampton was allocated a total of £237,085 in 2014/15 and an indicative amount of £180,000 in 2015/16.
- 1.3 The implementation of the SEND reforms is being corporately reported as a single programme with four distinct 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 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 Early delivery of the new legislation has identified a number of critical areas for development. Joint working with the Clinical Commissioning Group is a fundamental part of the legislation and the delivery of EHCPs for disabled young people.
- 2.2 The Council is required to implement a new data base to support the conversion of educational statements to EHCPs. The Implementation Grant will be able to support this plus the further development of the local offer, the statutory mediation service and training for staff in a range of services.
- 2.3 The most significant area of development relates to the implementation of personalisation. In order to progress this area, the SEND task and finish group has engaged In-Control to work with the Council and its partners to ensure they are able to deliver the personalisation agenda.
- 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 £237,085 in 2014/15 and an indicative amount of £160,000 in 2015/16 through the SEND implementation grant. 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 its statutory reforms.

- 3.2 Table 1 below outlines the activities that need to be undertaken to successfully implement the programme in the required timescales.

Table 1

Activity	Recommended Budget £000 2014/15	Recommended Budget £000 2015/16
SEND implementation		
Health - Support for EHCP, GP engagement	90	0
Mediation- To fund new burden of potential mediation between partner agencies	30	0
New Capita data base to support EHCP	20	0
Local Offer IT - Consultant to support ongoing implementation of Local Offer	40	0
Continuation of Conversion activity	0	130
To support the provision of the new duties of the Parent Partnership service	0	30
Support for the personalisation programme via In-Control	10	0
To respond to increased demand for Educational psychology	0	
Training	10	0
Total	200	160

- 3.3 The balance of the grant of £37,000 for 2014/15 will be offered up as a one off saving.
- 3.4 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/09102014/L]

4.0 Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are legal implications associated with this report as The Council has a legal obligation to implement the key elements of the Children and Families Act 2014.
[RB/10102014/A]

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. The equalities analysis completed for the allocation of the SEND reform grant also applies to the allocation of this grant.

6.0 Environmental Implications

- 6.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

7.0 Human Resources Implications

- 7.1 The implementation grant is being used to increase staffing capacity in the Parent Partnership as it takes on its new duties to provide information advice and guidance to disabled children and young people. All relevant human resource processes will be followed to establish and fill the posts.

8.0 Corporate Landlord Implications

- 8.1 There are no corporate landlord implications associated with this report.

9.0 Schedule of Background Papers

- 9.1 There are no background papers