



## **BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH and POOLE (BCP) SHADOW SCHOOLS FORUM**

Subject	High Needs Block (HNB)
Meeting Date	31 October 2018
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Status	Public
Classification	For decision by all members
Executive Summary	This report provides details of the current position relating to the HNB as provided to the Budget Reference Group (BRG) and of the detail of the ISOS reviews conducted in Bournemouth and Poole in 2017. This is to enable consideration of a recommendation to be made to the Shadow Schools' Forum in November regarding a potential transfer to the HNB from the Schools' Block.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That a BCP High Needs Financial Strategy Group be established to oversee the impact of agreed work to reduce the demand of the HNB.
Reasons for Recommendations	Bournemouth and Poole currently have partnership groups with schools that look in detail at the financial demands on the HNB and how to work to reduce these demands. It would now be appropriate to join this work so a BCP perspective can be taken.

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Bournemouth and Poole commissioned reviews of Special Education Needs and Disabilities and other high needs provision in 2017. This was undertaken by ISOS, consultant professionals also used by central Government to consider strategies regarding SEND. They work with a number of Local Authorities (LAs) and were able to provide benchmarking data and bring knowledge of work being undertaken by LAs and schools across the county.
- 1.2 The executive summaries of these 2 reviews are attached to this report (Appendix A and B).
- 1.3 Similar issues were identified in the 2 local areas.



- Placements in independent and non-maintained provision were high and Bournemouth and Poole had fewer pupils needs being met within their mainstream schools.
- There had been a large demand for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) from schools and this was driving a significant increase in costs.
- Bournemouth and Poole schools had increased permanent exclusions from mainstream schools, resulting in an increased number of Alternative Provision (AP) places being required and/or high cost “bespoke” packages where no places were available.
- Local special schools were full due to the high increase in EHCPs.
- Whilst Poole special schools offered outreach to mainstream, this required reviewing so it could become more targeted. Bournemouth special schools had no outreach offer and this needed development.
- There was a gap in provision between the mainstream offer and special schools with mainstream Headteachers reporting that they could meet a wider range of needs if further resources were made available.

1.4 The Budget Reference Group (BRG) has received 2 reports on High Needs, both of which are included in this report as Appendix C – High Needs Block Pressures (28 June 2018) and Appendix D – High Needs Budget and Development of New Provision (20 September 2018).

1.5 The BRG meeting on the 18 October were provided with the current HNB demands or 2019-20 based on the latest available data. This showed a shortfall within the funding available of nearly £6 million.

## **2. Recommendation**

2.1 Clearly it is important that the LAs and schools work together to set the DSG (including the HNB) for 2019-20.

2.2 The NHB for 2019-20 currently does not balance and predictions show that the following have led to this situation:

- Continued increase in EHCPs
- Continued trends of permanent exclusion
- Post 16 and post 19 demands introduced in the 2014 SEND Code of Practice

2.3 It is recommended that a BCP High Needs Financial Strategy Group be established to oversee the impact of agreed work to reduce the demand of the HNB.



### **3. Legal Implications**

- 3.1 There is a considerable legal framework which surrounds provision and decision making regarding SEND. Ultimately a SEND Tribunal can direct the placement and therefore spend for an individual pupil for SEND provision from the HNB. It is important in looking at how changes are made that schools provide parents/carers with confidence that pupil needs can be met in local provision.
- 3.2 There is also a legal framework and supporting DfE guidance for schools to take into account when considering a permanent exclusion from school.

### **5. Background Papers**

- 5.1 None