



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 6TH NOVEMBER 2018

SUBJECT: EDUCATION OTHER THAN AT SCHOOL (EOTAS)

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION & CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the intended course of action to address the current service and financial challenges associated with the provision of Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) across Caerphilly.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 At the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee of the 25th September 2018, the Committee received a report setting out the projected 2018-19 outturn position for the Education and Lifelong Learning function based on the most recent information available.
- 2.2 The predicted position across the Education and Lifelong learning function was a forecast overspend of £438k at year end. This overall net position, however, was impacted significantly by the forecast £830k overspend in relation to EOTAS, additional support and the provision of out of county Education.
- 2.3 The costs of EOTAS provision has been increasing over several financial years and, as a result, this has been added as a growth item in the draft budget proposals for 2019/20 which will be considered by Cabinet on the 14th November 2018.
- 2.4 That aside, the Education Service recognises the need to explore options to deal with future demand, improve the services being currently provided to our vulnerable learners and managing costs more effectively.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Corporate Plan 2018-23 – Wellbeing Objective 1 - Improve Education Opportunities for All
- Outcome 2 – Raise standards of attainment.
Outcome 4 – Help those who are not able to follow a traditional attainment path
Outcome 8 – Safeguard all children and young people in order to create a climate for learning, particularly for those most vulnerable.
- 3.2 Exclusion form Schools and Pupil Referral Units Guidance 2015.
- 3.3 SEN and Inclusion Strategy.
- 3.4 SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002).

3.5 Education in Wales: Our National Mission.

3.6 Eotas: Framework for Action (2017).

3.7 Equality and Equity in Education (2017).

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) provision accommodates learners who are unable to attend and learn in a mainstream school setting for varying reasons. The numbers of pupils requiring such support of this nature is increasing, as are the associated costs.

4.2 The numbers of children accessing the Authority's home tuition service has shown an increased trend over the last three years (numbers total between 130 -170 at any one time), linked in part to the rise in mental health needs. These numbers relate particularly to Yr 8 pupils and above. The demand for those accessing procured EOTAS provisions has remained consistent at between 85 – 110 learners at any one time, however this is against a background of increasing charges per learner.

4.3 Currently, internal support for our most vulnerable learners is linked to Schools in particular the Special Resource Base (SRB); the Authority's Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) at Glan Y Nant, together with increasing support from the Youth Service.

4.4 Alongside this internal delivery are a range of procured providers, complimented by a number of Agency based staff. The costs associated with these external elements of provision are becoming increasingly more expensive and are, by their nature, difficult to control.

4.5 The Local Authority has been considering the impact and costs of existing provision and has begun to engage key stakeholders on the benefits of a potential new model. The new model would need to be capable of meeting the changing needs of our vulnerable learners, provide a high quality support and learning environment and reduce the Council's exposure to cost increases moving forwards. The following questions have informed this early engagement:

- what is currently in place to support children in schools and alternative provision?
- what is working successfully and what could be improved?
- what could we do to respond to any potential gaps in provision?
- how can the needs of all learners be met ensuring that they have an equality of opportunity to achieve their potential?

4.6 The engagement to date, which has included education staff, primary, secondary and special school head teachers, pastoral leaders (secondary) and staff from the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) has identified the following needs that any new model should aim to address:

- building capacity in schools to meet the needs of the majority of learners
- addressing identified gaps
- meeting the specific needs of learners (emotional wellbeing, mental health, behaviour and learning) where needs cannot be met in mainstream settings
- providing a sustainable & flexible model of delivery
- providing targeted, bespoke, high quality teaching and learning
- contributing to improved outcomes for learners
- demonstrating value for money

4.7 With a forecast overspend in EOTAS provision at the end of the current financial year, a desire to improve the provision for our most vulnerable learners and the beginnings of a new model starting to take shape, the Council would like to appoint a Head of Provision for Vulnerable Learners to transform existing provision. The appointment would provide much needed additional and dedicated capacity that would help accelerate the development and implementation of a new model that the Head of Provision for Vulnerable Learners would

ultimately oversee the provision.

4.8 The primary focus of the role would be:

- to support the establishment of a model of provision for Caerphilly that would meet the needs set out in 4.5
- to support the development of a fully costed business case and options appraisal for consideration
- to put in place the necessary partnerships and relationships to support the new provision
- to create and lead a provision that can be considered a centre of excellence for vulnerable learners.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

5.1 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act and more specifically for the principles noted below.

- Long term – The report considers the importance of balancing the short term needs to safeguard the ability to also meet long term needs. Continuing to support and work with schools to promote a common moral purpose in managing a spectrum of learners' behavioural needs. Promoting early intervention and the use of appropriate strategies to support learner needs within their mainstream settings is crucial to the effective implementation of a sustainable behaviour model.
- Prevention – Implementing effective early intervention strategies and support working collaboratively with schools, and all other service providers will reduce the need for more intensive interventions later in learners educational pathways. This will be balanced against having effective identification systems and referral routes identified to support learners during their educational journey.
- Integration – The behaviour and wellbeing of all Caerphilly learners leads to a more prosperous and healthy adult population.
- Collaboration - Working collaboratively with other service providers such as health, social care and youth services provides a more cohesive approach to managing the behavioural needs identified within the education system.
- Involvement – All stakeholders need to be full participants in this behavioural model development to support and challenge and enhance the development itself. This will be at a local, regional and national level. This approach will lead to increased outcomes for all learners as they progress into adult hood and become meaningful contributors to living and working Caerphilly.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Council's full Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) process is adhered to at all times.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 It is anticipated that the Head of Provision for Vulnerable Learners will be recruited at the Teaching Leadership Range L15 to L19 (£73,364 to £80,941 inclusive of on costs).

7.2 The draft budget proposals for 2019/20 recognise the financial pressures facing this statutory area of the service and include a proposed allocation of growth to support delivery. It is anticipated that the costs associated with the new post will form part of the growth allocation.

7.3 Subject to Council approval of the 2019/20 budget, the service would look to progress with the recruitment of this post.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The appointment of the Head of Provision for Vulnerable Learners is a new post and it is intended that it will be advertised internally and externally at the same time.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 The report reflects the views of consultees.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Members are asked to consider the content of the report and provide comments.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The recommendations reflect the need to develop a sustainable, fit for purpose model of provision for the most vulnerable learners.

12. STATUTORY POWER

- 12.1 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
Education Act 1996.
Equality Act 2010.
United Nations Convention On The Rights Of The Child.
Inclusion and Pupil Support Guidance Welsh Government 2016.

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