

**TRANSFORMING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY  
(SEND) SERVICES**

*Report of the Director of Children's Services*

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**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To provide an update on the programme to transform Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Services in Hertfordshire.

**2. Summary**

2.1 The County Council is responsible for a range of services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities ("SEND). There are already financial pressures on these services, and the increasing demography and complexity of need means the demand for high cost specialist services will significantly increase these pressures over the next five years.

2.2 In addition, the support and services currently offered have developed over a number of years and parents/carers, schools and professionals have fed back that the system is complex and difficult to navigate. As a response to these issues, a business case for establishing a Transforming SEND Services Programme, supported by Invest to Transform funding, was considered by this Panel and agreed by [Cabinet in July 2018 \(item 07\)](#).

2.3 The outcomes from the transformation programme will ensure services for children and young people with SEND and their families provide effective intervention, manage the increasing demand and make efficient use of resources. Families will be able to access support in their local communities, be connected and more independent of public sector services, and this will reduce pressure across the SEND system in the local authority and the local health economy.

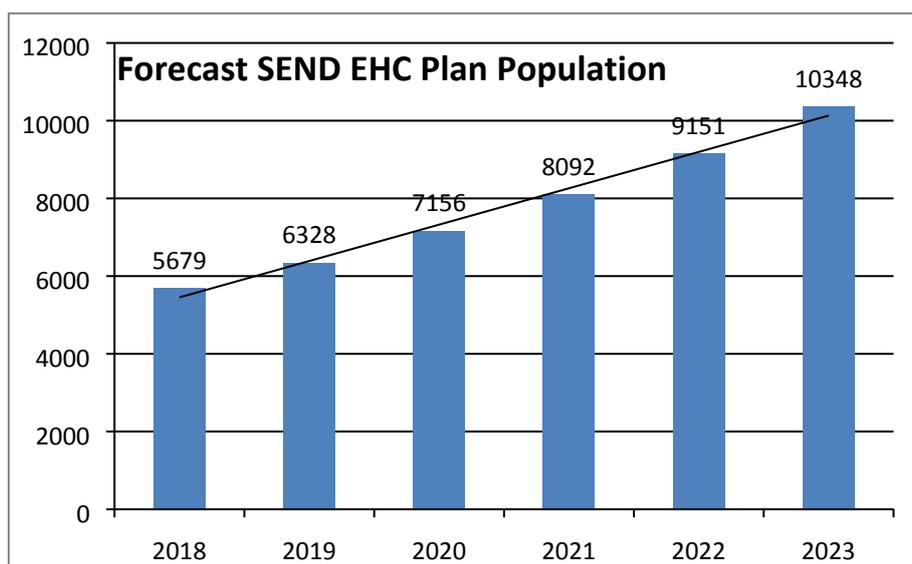
2.4 This paper is the second programme update to this Panel and sets out a high level summary of the programme activity since the [last panel report in June 2018 \(item 5\)](#) that is moving Hertfordshire towards a more collaborative and inclusive approach for SEND.

### 3. Recommendation

3.1 The Cabinet Panel is invited to note and comment upon the progress of the Transforming SEND Services Programme.

### 4. Background

4.1 Demand for services for children and young people with SEND has increased dramatically in recent years. Although the number of children or young people requiring an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in Hertfordshire remains below the statistical neighbours, EHCP numbers are growing rapidly and are currently forecasted to grow by 82% between 2018 and 2023, equivalent to an additional 4669 children and young people. Both nationally and locally in Hertfordshire, there is also a continuing correlation between SEND with EHCP and school exclusions, low attainment and those Not in Education Employment and Training (NEET), which can then have a negative impact long into adulthood. The number of young people with EHCP educated outside of Hertfordshire has increased every year since 2015 and the number of registered SEN appeals is rising.



*The Forecast Increase in the SEND EHC Plan Population in Hertfordshire*

4.2 The Cabinet report in July 2018 set out the transformation case for change which highlighted a number of factors for this demand including:

- Ambitious and far-reaching changes within the 2014 SEND Code of Practice to the scope and focus of responsibilities for children and young people (0-25) with SEND.

- Demographic changes due to local population growth alongside advances in medical science, the impact of adverse child experiences and early life trauma, growing mental health concerns for young people, rising levels of poverty among families with children and better diagnoses of some conditions are contributing to an increasing complexity of need.
- Pressure on schools, particularly those which have maintained a high degree of inclusion
- Pressure on the availability of supporting services with sufficient capacity to enhance a strong culture of prevention and early intervention.

4.3 The 'Transforming SEND Services' programme, supported by Invest to Transform funding, is focused on three key workstreams:

- Supporting inclusion and capacity in mainstream schools and special schools through enhancing local delivery networks;
- Building the confidence of parents and young people in the local offer and EHCP process particularly through digital opportunities; and
- Developing new and enhancing existing pathways to prepare for adulthood and independence.

Achieving this will help us to deliver the strategic objectives for the programme of:

- Effective Early Intervention
- Demand Management
- Efficient Use of Resources
- Integrated Joint Commissioning
- 0-25 Approaches across all services

## **5. The Hertfordshire SEND Dashboard and Self-Assessment**

5.1 The 2015 SEND Code of Practice states that:

*'To inform commissioning decisions, partners should draw on the wide range of local data sets as well as qualitative information about the likely education, health and social care needs of children and young people with SEN or disabilities.'*

5.2 Since the last update to this Panel, the Hertfordshire SEND Dashboard has been developed to begin to give partners insight as to how the SEND System is operating. It fits with aspirations in the Transforming SEND Service programme to:

- Improve the use of data and evidence in the SEND system
- Make data available for key stakeholders as and when they need it

- Increase transparency about how SEND services are performing; and
  - To help drive transformation and service improvement activity.
- 5.3 A summary of the key data from the dashboard will available as a presentation at the Panel.
- 5.4 A self-assessment tool of Hertfordshire's SEND system has also been developed with multi-agency input alongside Hertfordshire Parent Carer Involvement representatives. The self-assessment aims to:
- Identify areas of strength and potential improvement for each age and stage from 0 to 25, cutting across the themes education, social care and health.
  - Offer a series of recommendations that could significantly enhance Hertfordshire's SEND system.
  - Provide a Hertfordshire 'SEND narrative' that accurately and effectively describes Hertfordshire's SEND system.

The self-assessment tool is nearing completion and the findings will be reported to a future Panel.

## **6. Enhancing Local Delivery Networks**

- 6.1 The desired outcomes of this workstream are to support inclusion and capacity in mainstream schools and special schools through greater coordination of service delivery locally so that:
- More children with SEND are educated within a local school and participate in their local community
  - Local mainstream schools are well supported to deliver inclusive and flexible provision
  - There are clearer pathways to access support which include health, social care, and education provision.
- 6.2 The previous update to Children, Young People and Families' Cabinet Panel in June 2019 highlighted the feedback from a number of schools that they are supporting many more children with SEND than previously; particularly where a school has a good reputation for teaching children with SEND and that pressure on school base budgets means it is increasingly difficult to meet these children's needs without further support and that current arrangements to access this additional funding are in need of review and that there is a need to increase local places for pupils with complex needs.
- 6.3 As a response to this feedback, a review of the system for Meeting Complex Needs in Mainstream Schools has now been completed of the current arrangements for accessing top-up funding for Children and Young People and recommendations made to develop an effective funding system to support children and young people with complex

needs to achieve successful outcomes in mainstream school and settings. Implementation plans are in place, to adopt a transition to a new system from April 2020. In recognition of the immediate demands on schools' finances and the continuing pressures on resources, a number of interim measures to increase the flexibility of the current funding system have also been put in place to support schools.

- 6.4 The Hertfordshire SEND Toolkit has developed and launched as a new resource accompanies the Hertfordshire SEND Quality Offer and the SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool. Together this suite of materials provides schools with a vision, a self-evaluation framework and now has a toolkit providing a range of resources, tools and guidance. Launch workshops have taken place in each Delivering Special Provision Locally (DSPL) area during the autumn term, with a further round planned across the county in February.

<http://publications.hertsforlearning.co.uk/160122/160407/236064/HfLS-ENDtoolkit2019/index.html?r=70>

- 6.5 Building on analysis of children and young people currently in independent and non-maintained special and residential schools alongside updated long term forecasts of demand for special school places, work is progressing well to increase the availability of specialist provision in Hertfordshire.

- 6.6 A number of special schools have been identified where capital expenditure will be required to either maintain existing pupil places and/or to add places to meet local demand. A range of projects have been identified and specific proposals agreed by [Cabinet in December 2019](#) which will deliver an additional 71 special school places in existing special schools during the 2020/21 academic year.

- 6.7 The process for inviting sponsor bids for the new Special Free School concluded at the end of September 2019. Joint evaluation with the Department for Education will take place over the coming months with an outcome expected to be announced in Spring term 2020. Assuming a suitable sponsor is identified and approved, the Department for Education (DfE) timescale for the anticipated opening of the school with 60 complex needs places is September 2022.

- 6.8 In addition to increasing capacity within special schools in Hertfordshire, proposals are developing for new Specialist Resource Provisions (SRP) in both primary and secondary mainstream schools across the county for children and young people with Social Communication Difficulties (SCD) / Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC). These provisions will provide centres of excellence to meet needs locally, provide personalised support and build capacity both across the schools in which they are based but also through working with other schools in the local area to support meeting these types of needs and improving outcomes. Expressions of interest are currently

being invited from mainstream schools to deliver these provisions which will provide up to 128 specialist full time equivalent placements from September 2021.

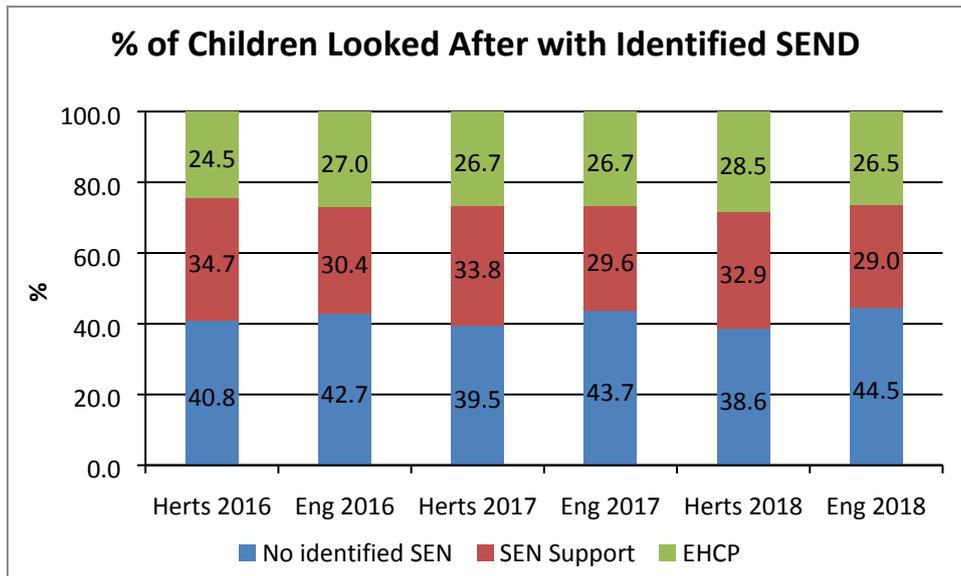
- 6.9 Alongside these measures to increase specialist provision and promote inclusion, a range of new ways of working to provide clearer pathways and improved access to support are also being developed and tested. Much of this prototype activity is being focused in the Stevenage area with a range of different initiatives underway and a Locality Manager role came into post in December 2019 to oversee this work.
- 6.10 An audit of Families First Assessments (Hertfordshire's Early Help assessment tool) highlighted that 63% of the audited involved families with at least one child or young person with SEND. Stakeholders have highlighted that there is an opportunity to do more to closely coordinate specialist SEND and Families First support together and better coordinate and monitor multiple support needs that families may have. A six month pilot began in December 2019 to provide a specialist SEND / Early Help Interface Family Practitioner, based at Greenside Special School for one day a week as well as working closely with targeted support workers in the Stevenage locality to develop a SEND Early Help toolkit.
- 6.11 Integrated Services for Learning (ISL) area teams adopted a new triage approach in September 2019 for cases requiring support from more than one education support service. Feedback has been positive, and the approach is being broadened to develop a virtual multi-agency team pilot in Stevenage. From January 2020, the first phase of the pilot will focus on providing a supportive forum for representatives from across education, health and social care to come together to present a case which is stuck or causing them concern, where the education progress is perceived to be stalling and/or the education provider feels they are no longer able to meet the educational needs or where blockages are preventing progress being made in terms of agreed outcomes. The intended outcome of the pilot is to enhance a culture of shared responsibility for SEND across services in the locality, increase the understanding of different services to lead to improved partnership working and create a more responsive, inclusive and confident workforce.
- 6.12 The new School Family Support Partnerships contracts were implemented from the beginning of September, with a view to bringing greater alignment between the targeted support provided by Local School Partnerships and Delivering Specialist Provision Locally areas. Alongside the first round of termly contract monitoring which begins from January 2020, the new Locality Manager is actively engaging across the range of targeted support available in Stevenage to evaluate the current strengths and opportunities for change locally. Alongside the work set out in the previous paragraphs, this will inform the next stage of prototype development around targeted support.

6.13.1 The programme has also established links with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) transformation. Hertfordshire is a trailblazer area for the national pilot of Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) working with schools to strengthen support for children and young people with mental health issues. The new local MHSTs will address the needs of children and young people by:

- Delivering evidence based interventions in or close to schools and colleges for those with mild to moderate mental health issues.
- Helping children and young people with more severe needs to access the right support.
- Working with and within schools and colleges, providing a link to specialist NHS services.
- Building on and increasing support already in place, rather than replacing it

6.13.2 There is an expectation that mental health staff in these teams will spend much of their working week in schools supporting children and young people directly so that mental health issues can be addressed in a timely way and do not escalate to requiring support from specialist CAMHS services. The initial trailblazer for Hertfordshire was for two MHSTs, one in each Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) area. The two Hertfordshire teams cover selected schools in the districts of Broxbourne and St Albans due to the high numbers of CAMHS referrals seen in these areas. Training for the initial cohort of MHSTs commenced in January 2019, with the expectation that the MHSTs were fully operational by December 2019. Over the summer a bid for a second wave of trailblazer MHSTs was successful in securing funding for a third team to work with 10 special schools across Hertfordshire. Staff employed in this second wave commenced training in October 2019 and the team will be fully operational in September 2020.

6.14 Data from the Virtual School shows that within the cohort of all school-aged Hertfordshire Children Looked After, around 36% (n=239) either have an Education, Health and Care Plan or are in the process of being assessed for one and a further 24% (n=160) of the cohort are receiving SEN support in school. This is also reflected in national data: as the chart below shows, Hertfordshire (for those children looked after continuously for 12 months or more) has a slightly higher proportion of children looked after with identified SEND and this difference is likely to be due to the relatively low rate of children in Hertfordshire who are looked after meaning that the complexity of the cohort is greater.



*The proportion of school aged children who have been looked after continuously for 12 months with identified SEN*

Closer links between the SEN teams and Virtual School have been established to focus on coordinating support and a business case is being developed to pilot an enhanced brokerage function particular when these children and young people are entering care at crisis point or placement breakdown requiring a placement move creates a particular challenge in terms of identifying suitable provisions to meet both education and social care needs. A yearlong pilot is anticipated to begin by April 2020.

## **7. Maximising the Benefits of Digital Technology**

7.1 The desired outcomes of this workstream are to build the confidence of families and professionals in the local offer and EHCP process so that:

- Families feel there is a personalised offer from a system designed around their needs and those of their child
- Parents and practitioners don't have to spend so much time navigating the system through clear, integrated access routes
- Parents feel empowered and more resilient
- Practitioners have more capacity to work directly with families and support schools and others to do so

7.2 A key area of focus for this workstream has been on improving information, advice and support for families and improving Hertfordshire's Local Offer – the collated information, services and activities for young people with SEND and their families – with a view to *finding digital solutions to life's offline challenges for families and children with SEND.*

- 7.3 Since January 2019, the SEND Digital team have worked extensively with parents and professionals to co-produce the new Local Offer website that is a friendlier resource for parents and professionals and improve the information available online. Parents have been actively engaged throughout the process in reviewing existing content, shaping the new design and helping to write the new content. This co-production has included around 1000 interactions with parents and practitioners through the initial discovery research phase, the establishment of the SEND Online Feedback Group, and 110 face-to-face interactions with a range of schools, SEND services and information providers.
- 7.4 The new Local Offer website launched in a 'test' site alongside the existing format at the beginning of December 2019 and the full version launched early in the new year with a showcase event for parents on 21 January 2020. Further projects to enhance the website over the coming year and will be included in future updates.

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer)

- 7.5 As a result of feedback from families through this engagement and wider work, there is also the recognition of the need for strengthening the wider Information, Advice and Support (IAS) available. For example, parents have told us that whilst online support is accessible for most it is not the preferred channel for all; that they want to be able to speak to someone with specialist knowledge when appropriate; and that our information, advice and support reflects and can respond to the spectrum of families' needs ranging from universal to highly specialist requirements.
- 7.6 A review of the current impartial SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) arrangements is nearing completion. The review is focused on performance against the National Minimum Standards, and benchmarked against other relevant Local Authorities and opportunities to deliver an enhanced information, advice and support offer linked to levels of support as set out in the diagram below.

| Intervention levels for SEND Information, Advice and Support  |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | Service User Need   | Examples of tailored support from non SEND IASS Service, offered F2F & non F2F  |
|  Increase in SEND specialism | <b>Level 4</b><br>Any or all of Levels 1,2 & 3 plus detailed & continuing assistance & guidance with preparation & support during: <b>First Tier Tribunal (SEND), including DDA complaints to Tribunal, Complaints to Ombudsman, Judicial Review, Disputes about Child Protection</b>   | <i>No wrong door</i> approach. <b>Provision of specialist support with relevant and potential legal training (e.g. SEND IASS, Money Advice Unit).</b>   |
|   | <b>Level 3</b><br>Any or all of Levels 1 & 2 plus: detailed & continuing IAS with <b>complex/ multi-agency needs, overcoming serious breakdown in communications with school/LA/other services, requires intensive support due to personal circumstances</b> (e.g. low literacy levels, English as a second language) & <b>statutory processes.</b> | <i>No wrong door</i> approach. <b>Provision of support at/ for a series of meetings, ongoing support with statutory processes (EHC needs assessment, disagreement resolution, mediation etc.), assistance with preparation for an exclusion appeal &amp; support at the appeal meeting.</b> |
|   | <b>Level 2</b><br>Any or all of Level 1 plus: help to: <b>support in communicating with school, the LA, other services, etc., personalised information and advice on following SEND or exclusion procedures, assistance in accessing services, understand or complete documentation</b>   | <i>No wrong door</i> approach. <b>Research and provision of specialised advice and information, provision of support at/for meetings, liaison with other agencies.</b>  |
|   | <b>Level 1</b><br>Information and advice about SEND matters, such as: <b>local SEND services, local SEND processes &amp; procedures, support groups, funding arrangements, web based resources, national organisations.</b>   | <i>No wrong door</i> approach. Will include tailored <b>signposting to self-help opportunities, voluntary sector community and non-statutory services.</b>  |

Levels of IAS support

7.7 The project to implement a new EHCP online workflow has been engaging with a range of users and other local authorities to evaluate systems against the requirements and benefits identified by a range of stakeholders including families, SEN teams, other local authority and health professionals and headteachers and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs). The options appraisal has now concluded and a recommendation for implementation agreed by the project board. The new digital platform will enable greater transparency and efficiencies in service provision and provide a foundation to enable parents and other professionals to input information and track their child's EHCPs through access portals. Implementation is expected to roll-out for local authority staff from March 2020 and the team is beginning to work closely with the supplier to develop associated parental portals for testing along with the extension of remote access to systems for schools and other professionals from September 2020.

7.8 The next phase of the digital workstream will focus on improvements to the business processes associated with Education, Health and Care Planning and Review. For example, there are a range of different panel processes associated with meeting need for children and young people with SEND. Discovery work completed with families and key stakeholders across education, health and social care highlights that the current arrangements are fragmented between assessment, resource allocation and the identification of provision. This is creating additional complexity for families, schools and practitioners in navigating the system. As well as exploring efficiencies such as moving towards more paperless approaches, reducing time-consuming processes, and better tracking and reporting, the programme is also now working in partnership with Hertfordshire's newly established Behaviour Change Unit (BCU). The BCU is a specialist team of

behavioural scientists based in Public Health and working across the Council directorates to provide leadership and guidance on the use of behavioural science and helping to embed these approaches within key initiatives. The programme is working with the BCU to develop and test new approaches to our decision-making processes around SEND with new approaches due to be tested in the spring.

## **8. Better Preparation for Adulthood**

8.1 The desired outcomes of this workstream are that '*Children and Young People with SEND will be able to successfully move into adult life with equal life chances, independence and work opportunities to achieve their aspirations as citizens of Hertfordshire*' so that:

- Families have confidence that transitions are well planned to enable children to move confidently through their life
- More young people make a fulfilling contribution to their local community and economy
- Demand is reduced for out-of-county college placements and long-term reliance on adult social care services

8.2 Engagement with over 150 multiagency stakeholders and parents through a series of focus groups took place over the summer to inform the next phase of the Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) workstream. In direct response to feedback received through those events, governance has been strengthened with the establishment of a PfA Board to provide a strategic link between the PfA Provider Network attended by the 4 FE colleges and representatives from Special Schools and other post-16 services and the overarching SEND Strategic Leadership Group. The PfA Board is chaired by Jo Fisher, Operations Director for Children and Young People and with senior representatives from Adult Care Services and Children's Services. A programme manager came into post at the end of October to lead work in five outcome areas identified by the PfA Board around Meaningful Activity (including Employment), Home, Health, Social Engagement and Learning.

8.3 Within the learning workstream, work is underway with Herts for Learning to extend Hertfordshire's SEND Quality Offer to incorporate post-16 settings including revising the Hertfordshire Benchmarking and Planning Tool and updating the SEND toolkit to be relevant to post-16 settings. This will help support inclusion in these settings and aims to develop better shared understanding of the post-16 entitlement for every young person with SEND. The work is on track to be completed and the Quality Offer to be communicated widely by April 2020 with adoption of the new Benchmarking Tool from next academic year.

8.4 Evaluation evidence highlights the success of existing Transition Support Workers in working with young people from Learning Disability and Social Emotional and Mental Health Special Schools to move

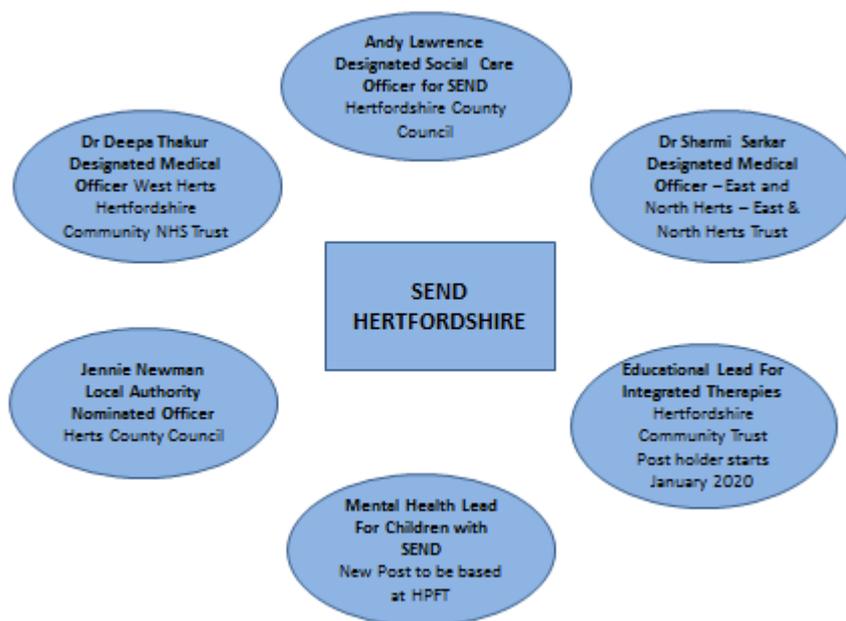
successfully into further education colleges. There has been a steady increase in the cohort supported and in the last year, 96.5% of the identified cohort made the move to college and all but one (112/113) have remained in college successfully. Building on this success, an action research project is underway over the course of this academic year to develop enhance the support for transition for young people with SEND moving on from mainstream schools. In the first instance, the project is working closely with North Herts College and Priory, Highfield and Knights Templar schools to develop and test a Transition Entitlement Framework that will inform the practice of SEND managers and practitioners in mainstream school and college provision.

- 8.5 A business case has been developed to prototype a new 'My Future Coach' role as a response to feedback from the summer focus groups that there is less support for transition for young people as they approach the end of college. Subject to agreement by the PfA Board in January, the pilot will run for up to 18 months at North Herts College initially and seek to provide move intensive support with the cohort of young people in their final year of college to facilitate and broker moving into a meaningful opportunity such as employment. If successful, the pilot will reduce the current demand for day opportunities and support the objectives of the Adult Care Services transformation. Three community-based projects to enhance community navigation, peer support and independent living skills are also in the final stages of commissioning and will be implemented early in 2020.
- 8.6 The 'Home' workstream is developing in partnership with the Adult Care Accommodation Service a new Accommodation Transition Strategy that will shape the accommodation offer and supported living available for young people as they move into adult services. Initial work has focused on developing a much more robust joint approach to forecasting demand and needs of future cohorts. The new strategy is expected to be brought forward for approval in April 2020.

## **7. Governance**

- 7.1 Section 25 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to ensure integration between education provision and training provision, health and social care provision, where this would promote wellbeing and improve the quality of provision for disabled young people and those with SEN.
- 7.2 Taken in the round, the aspirations set out in the SEND Strategy, the Transforming SEND Services case for change, wider service improvements plans, and the Children's Services Outcome Bee Framework evidence the need for single, whole system governance to provide a focal point for collective strategic leadership across the SEND landscape.

- 7.3 The SEND Strategic Leadership Group provides the countywide system governance for SEND and is now fully established. Chaired by the Operations Director, Services for Children and Young People (Children's Services), membership has been broadened from the predecessor SEND Executive. Members include the Council's Children's Social Care, Integrated Services for Learning, Children's Services SEND Commissioners and Adult Learning Disability Commissioners and Public Health colleagues as well as both East and North Hertfordshire and Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Groups, an Early Years provider representative, a FE College Principal, Headteacher representatives from Primary, Secondary and Special sectors, an Education Support Centre Head, Herts for Learning and Herts Parent Carers Involvement Parent representatives. This strategic leadership group for SEND will also champion the SEND agenda with the wider strategic groups in the County such as Representative Forums, Elected Members, and Health and Wellbeing Board and the Sustainability & Transformation Partnership.
- 7.4.1 Good progress has been made to enhance the capacity of NHS SEND leadership and expertise in Hertfordshire is progressing. There are now two Designated Medical Officers (DMO) in place, one hosted by Hertfordshire Community Trust, delivering the DMO role for West Herts, and one hosted by East & North Herts NHS Trust who provides the DMO role for East and North Herts. Both are community pediatricians. The DMO role is to co-ordinate and improve health SEND planning and practice within the local area and to provide overall strategic direction for the local health service in meeting statutory requirements for SEND, identifying priorities for development and facilitating improvement in implementation. Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust have also recruited to a post that will fulfil a county-wide SEND lead role for Integrated Therapies and Public Health Nursing due to start in early 2020. In November 2019, the Emotional and Mental Wellbeing board also agreed funding to support a senior level post in HPFT to lead on SEND, to act as the point of specialist CAMHs advice for EHCPs, embodying a multi-disciplinary and systems leadership approach.
- 7.4.2 The vision is that these posts will provide county wider senior leadership and SEND expertise in areas of physical and mental health and will work closely with colleagues in education and social care and streamline processes for getting health advice and support as well as reviewing and improving the quality of multiagency input into EHCPs.



*SEND Leadership Network*

## 9 Financial Implications

9.1 In addition to the benefits to citizens of Hertfordshire and their families with SEND, officers anticipate realising financial savings as well as the avoidance of unnecessary costs across the children’s system in Hertfordshire. The revised financial efficiencies for Hertfordshire County Council included in the Integrated Planning Process (IPP) are:

|                                  | <b>20/21</b>   | <b>21/22</b>   | <b>22/23</b>   |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Service Efficiencies             | £230k          | £230k          | £230k          |
| Home to School Transport Savings | £266k          | £532k          | £797k          |
| <b>COST AVOIDANCE</b>            | <b>£1,554k</b> | <b>£1,912k</b> | <b>£2,285k</b> |

9.2 Realising these benefits alongside efficiency savings will be achieved as a result of transformation activity in the medium term and future reports to members will include clear proxy indicators that evidence progress towards this. In the short term, because of the continuing demand for EHCP assessment, there is a risk that achieving the service efficiency savings identified in the Integrated Plan for 2020/21 cannot be fully achieved as a direct result of the transformation programme activity – which will require a pressure being flagged in 2020/21.

9.3 Nationally, there is a growing concern about the adequacy of funding given the rising costs of provision for children and young people with SEN and those who are disabled, and about the reducing availability of

specialist advice and support. As a response, the government announced a major SEND review in September 2019.

## **10 Equality Implications**

- 10.1 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of, and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.
- 10.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council's statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.
- 10.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 10.4 Specific EqIAs are being undertaken for the work streams within the programme as the work and proposals for change are developed as well as an overarching assessment at a programme level.
- 10.5 There is no EqIA relating to this report.

### **Background information**

[Cabinet panel report in June 2018 \(item 5\)](#)

[Cabinet in December 2019](#)