

## **LBR SEND Partnership Board Sept 2019**

### **LBR SEND Futures Plan 2019/20 to 2021/22**

#### **Update report**

##### **1. Introduction**

Richmond's SEND Futures Plan was approved at the Council's Education and Children's Services Committee on 25 July following a period of consultation between the 17 June and 14 July. The Plan sets out the strategic plan to drive improved outcomes for children with SEND in Richmond, led by the Council, Achieving for Children (AfC) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and supported by all relevant partner agencies. The Plan is owned and overseen by the SEND Partnership Board, which will report on progress to the Health & Wellbeing Board, through the proposed Children & Families Strategic Partnership and as one of the core priorities of the Richmond Health and Care Plan. The Plan, along with accompanying documentation such as the findings of the consultation and the Equality Impact Assessment can be found on the Council website at :

<https://cabnet.richmond.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=800&MIId=4687>

The final version of the plan, together with an easy read version and a summary of the changes made following the consultation in June and July, can be found on the Local Offer website at:

<https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/send-consultation-hub-and-resource-bank/send-futures-richmond>

##### **2. Workstream 1: Co-production, Engagement and Participation**

The SEND Futures Conference 2019 took place on 27 June under the strapline "Listen, Learn, Lead", and was attended by over 300 delegates from across the SEND system in Richmond (and Kingston). Parents and carers were joined by representatives of early years providers, nurseries, schools, colleges, the voluntary sector, health providers, elected Members / Councillors, school governors, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Department for Education, and a range of professions such as education and clinical psychologists and social workers. Attendees enjoyed keynote presentations from parent / carer representatives, the Chief Executive of Kingston Council and Leader of Richmond Council, the Managing Director of Kingston and Richmond CCGs, and the DfE's Lead SEN and Disability Professional Advisor. Reflecting feedback received following the SEND Futures Conference 2018, the day included eight workshops with delegates being able to attend the two most aligned to their bespoke circumstances or development needs. These workshops included "Towards a culture of co-production" delivered jointly by the highly regarded Rotherham Parent Carer Forum and "Leading a whole school approach to SEN Support" by Natalie Packer, a well respected independent education consultant. The highest rated workshop based on participant feedback was "Supporting girls and women with ADHD" led by Dr Jo Steer, Head of Emotional Health Service and Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Achieving for Children. Further information and all the materials used during the day, including a film donated by a local production company to summarise the key themes of the day can be found at:

<https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/send-consultation-hub-and-resource-bank/send-futures-conference-2019>

The Richmond SEND Partnership Board met for the third time in July. The meeting included a particular focus on transitions from children's to adults' services, with the item starting with a presentation by a young person who highlighted a lack of support around attending college, and that there is an underlying issue of a failure to promote high aspirations for young people with SEND. Other items included updates on the development of the performance dashboard and the impact of actions within the Plan. On this latter point, the main areas of concern are the ongoing significant increases in the number of EHCPs plus the resultant growth in expenditure, and concerns relating to workforce recruitment and retention. "Health" will be the subject of September's "deepdive", with this item being led by the CCG.

Richmond's Parent Panel met twice before the school summer holidays and are meeting again on 9th September when the focus of the meeting will be "Assessment and Pathways". There are additionally meetings being led by the Department for Education's commissioned provider Contact to establish the official Parent Carer Forum (PCF). Members of the Panel are already working on a number of co-production initiatives for example on future therapy provision and the ASD Strategy. They will also be involved in a review of the Local Offer website during the autumn.

### **3. Workstream 2: Joint Commissioning**

A new role of Director of Commissioning and Partnerships is to be recruited by AfC in the autumn and will lead the development of a centralised approach to education placement commissioning. This will include a more coordinated and systematic process to agreeing placements with tighter ongoing contract management arrangements to give quality and financial benefits.

### **4. Workstream 3: Local Provision**

The 10 year SEND places plan has been subsumed into the revised School Place Planning Strategy, which is being drafted. Mastodon C, the external organisation commissioning to assist with the modelling of likely future needs have completed their data baselining and are preparing to run the first scenario modelling. This will then be analysed to ensure that that provision gaps are identified, and plans put in place to fill these gaps as appropriate.

Regarding the new free school for SEMH, engagement meetings have been held with potential education providers and initial meetings have been held with DfE and ESFA representatives regarding feasibility, design and procurement processes. Bids to run the school must be submitted by the end of September. These will be considered jointly by LBR / AfC and the DfE, with a decision on the provider expected early in 2020.

The review of speech and language, occupational and physiotherapy provision in Richmond (and Kingston) continues. A number of consultation events have taken place to support the needs analysis due in the autumn. This will inform the commissioning of future services from April 2020.

### **5. Workstream 4: Early Intervention and Transitions**

A review of the Early Intervention Panel took place at the end of the summer term involving representatives of schools who have accessed this new process over the past 12 months, as well as providers of interventions. Positive feedback from schools included being referred to services that staff had previously been unaware of (e.g child welfare services and child welfare practitioners) and the benefit of rapid additional advice received from occupational and speech and language therapy. Areas of concern included a sense that on some occasions the resultant intervention was not that desired or indeed that it

was declined. Suggestions for improvements included amendments to the application forms and additional clarity on thresholds for the panel. The development of a learning and development programme to upskill professionals working in schools and colleges is ongoing and forms part of the workforce strategy work referred to in Workstream 1.

## **6. Workstream 5: Assessment and Planning**

An external SEND consultant has been commissioned 4 days per week to provide additional support and scrutiny for improvements being proposed and made within the SEN Team. She brings experience of practice in a number of other local authorities and has already made positive contributions to processes. Richmond have commissioned a "Peer Review" of SEND in the first week of October to be conducted by the Local Government Association. This will assess the impact of changes to the assessment and planning process implemented over the past twelve months and identify any additional improvements required. Performance as measured by issuance of EHCPs within 20 weeks remains very strong, being 99% since April (compared to the latest national figure of 60%).

The volume of casework within the SEN Team continues to grow significantly. The number of EHCPs amongst Richmond residents has increased from 1320 to 1454 in the 12 months to the start of September, an increase of 10% (this is broadly in line with the national picture). A sample taken over recent months shows that 81% of requests for these EHCPs come from schools (the rest from parents), with 56% relating to children between five and ten years, 30% between zero to four years and the remaining split evenly between 11 to 15 and 16+ years. Main primary needs have been ASD (52%) and speech, language and communication (15%).

## **7. Achieving value for money**

Significant cost pressures continue to arise in Richmond's High Needs Block in 2019/20 with the current position projecting spend of £31.33m against the budget allocation of £25.69m, representing an overspend of £5.7m. This includes consideration of the growth in the number of EHCPs, and assumes an increase in total EHCPs of 120 for the full financial year.

Earlier this month Government announced a significant increase in funding for SEND for financial year 2020/21 and beyond. Details are still pending but the annual HNB allocation is expected to grow by in excess of £2m.