

**Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes, Executive Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	<b>Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell, Executive Councillor for Adult Care and Health Services, Children's Services</b>
Date:	<b>10 June 2016</b>
Subject:	<b>Future Provision of Specialist Speech and Language Therapy Services into Primary Schools</b>
Decision Reference:	<b>I010968</b>
Key decision?	<b>No</b>

**Summary:**

This report sets out a proposal to change the way in which speech and language therapy services are delivered within school settings in Lincolnshire. The proposal would see the closure of the three dedicated speech and language units which are located at Fosse Way Primary, Lincoln, Monkshouse Primary, Spalding and Mablethorpe Primary, Mablethorpe. Fosse Way Primary and Mablethorpe Primary are Academy Schools and Monkshouse Primary is maintained by the Local Authority (LA).

Lincolnshire Community Health Service (LCHS) supports over 3150 children with a speech and/or language impairment from birth to leaving school age. Children who do not make progress through targeted speech and language therapy (SLT) provision are provided with additional therapeutic services through an 'enhanced model'.

If children fail to make progress they may be referred for more intensive support and warrant specialist provision to progress their listening, language and literacy skills within one of the above schools. At those schools children receive specific support within the mainstream school setting from specialist teachers and assistants. Alongside this, the units on the site provide dedicated therapeutic services provided by LCHS. Not all children with significant speech and language needs attend these schools as some parents do not wish their child to attend. LCHS therefore have to provide therapeutic support through alternative means to these children.

For children at primary age, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) currently commissions the above schools to provide at a single location the educational and therapeutic support to children with complex speech and language difficulties described above. At present there are 23 children at these schools receiving intensive SLT and educational support services.

On 9 March 2016 a six week period of consultation commenced which closed on

22 April 2016 and is further referred to in this report in the Consultation section. A summary of written responses received from both schools and through engagement with parents is attached in Appendices A and B.

The purpose of the service is to target SLT therapeutic provision early and begin to close the gap between the speech and language of the child against their peers. This early years work aims to withdraw the support at the point where they are able to be fully integrated into a mainstream local community school without intensive therapeutic support. However, as the child is on the roll of the school where the dedicated therapeutic provision is provided, transfer to a nearer or more local school is not always possible when they need to return as the nearer or more local school may not have any places available.

Further work has been undertaken with LCHS to develop the robustness of an alternative model to support children who require higher levels of intensive therapeutic support to ensure their continued progression in speech and language development. That alternative model of support provision will be 'needs led' and individual children will be taken through the assessment process for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) before being able to access the higher level 'Enhanced Plus' service.

Speech and Language Therapists, together with Specialist Teachers (for speech and language) will assess the needs of children and then work with the local mainstream primary school to implement strategies and support packages to aid their development. A review process will be implemented to ensure children make progress; eventually leading to either an ability to remove or reduce the level of intervention as the mainstream school becomes more adept to providing such support themselves.

This report seeks approval from the Executive Councillor to proceed to the next stage of the process to implement the alternative service whilst supporting parents/carers and pupils in the process to maintain their place within their current school or to support them to secure admission to a preferred alternative local mainstream primary setting.

**Recommendation(s):**

That the Executive Councillor

1. approves the proposal to implement an alternative model for 'Enhanced Plus' speech and language services to children requiring interventions based within the primary school in which they are on roll.
2. delegates to the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Adult Care and Health Services, Children's Services authority to take all decisions and enter into all necessary arrangements to give effect to the above decision.

**Alternatives Considered:**

The following alternative has been considered:

1. For the Local Authority (LA) to continue to place children with intensive speech and language needs at the schools referred to so that they can receive therapeutic intervention within the dedicated units provided. This alternative however continues to present the following disadvantages:
  - The solution would not enable children to be educated within their local community school with friends and/or family which could later impact the success of their transition into secondary provision
  - The SLT service provided would remain at only three units within the county so reducing parental choice
  - The alternative fails to remove the requirement for significant travel time across county for some children to the units and does not reduce home to school transportation costs in the longer term
  - It does not remove parental concern that when their child is ready to be reintegrated back into their local primary school they may not be able to be offered a place at the school of their choice
  - Schools continue to struggle to recruit into specialist teachers roles
  - The current process does not support the EHCP pathway for those children with complex needs, meaning they have inappropriate support provision and funding
  - The current model does not encourage local primary schools to develop their support to meet the needs of children with complex SLT needs thereby abrogating their knowledge and skills to employ strategies for any future children who may have similar needs
  - It fails to increase accountability for commissioned LCHS services in targeting achievement against agreed outcomes and progression

Due to the disadvantages stated this option is considered not to be a suitable alternative.

**Reasons for Recommendation:**

Local Authorities (LA) are under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, to promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential whilst at the same time meeting the aim of enabling children to take up a school place within their local community.

This recommendation proposes the provision of enhanced speech and language services to children requiring interventions in the school at which they are on roll. It is considered that this provision to be in the best interests of Lincolnshire's children.

- The recommendation reinforces the priorities in the Children and Young

People's Plan and supports the Council's aim of ensuring that as many children as possible can reach their full potential through an integrated localised service model.

- In a recent report "Reducing distant SEND placements – Increasing regional sufficiency" commissioned by NHS England and carried out by School Development Support Agency (SDSA) it states *"it is both feasible and achievable to reduce and eventually eliminate the need to place young people with complex SEND conditions in schools that are far away from the family home"*.
- The report further states *"If more children with complex SEND needs are educated in a mainstream school, ideally their local community school, then more places are available in special schools for those with more significant needs and fewer places are required in non-maintained schools and especially those far away"*.

The report also suggests that all new mainstream schools should be designed to include space and facilities that can be used to serve the education and therapeutic support needs of complex SEND conditions so enabling them to operate inclusive policies and be better placed to serve all children from their local community.

- The requirement to provide parental choice is a critical factor in determining the most appropriate solution to meet children's SLT needs. As stated during consultation the Education Act 1996 states *"In exercising or performing all their respective powers and duties under the Education Acts, the Secretary of State and local education authorities shall have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents, so far as that is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure"*. This recommendation supports this statutory responsibility.
- In addition the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states *"A local education authority in England shall exercise their functions under this section with a view to (a) securing diversity in the provision of schools, and (b) increasing opportunities for parental choice"*. This recommendation secures diversity within its provision of education across Lincolnshire and increases parental choice in enabling a child to remain placed within their local community school.
- The recommendation presented supports the requirement presented by ISOS Partnership to review of SEN provision in Lincolnshire including the enhanced provision of Speech and Language due to concerns raised in connection with the current commissioning arrangements.
- It is essential that the Dedicated Schools Budget (DSB) is used for purposes for which it is intended. There is evidence that elements of funding is being used for school activities outside of the main purpose of running the units. The recommended model ensures funding is utilised for its intended purposes in providing specialist teachers and to commission speech and language therapy services to support children with complex speech and language needs.

- As previously stated there are only three schools in the county able to provide the combination of educational and therapeutic resource which results in significant travel time for some children who are being transported long distances. The recommended model removes this concern.
- At present the pupils are provided with transport to and from school. As some parents have expressed a wish for their child to remain within their current school, the LA has agreed to continue to support their transportation requirements. As children move to alternative schools or transition into secondary provision this will gradually reduce the transport costs.
- By implementing the revised model, it has been agreed the three schools would not be adversely affected financially. The pupils in the units are on the school roll and top up funding will be provided where the numbers are over PAN (Published Admission Number) and then reclaimed as necessary as they fall below PAN.
- The revised model to provide the "Enhanced Plus" SLT service will be closely managed. Children will only be able to access this service once they have been assessed and approved for an EHCP, which will enable their progression to be closely managed and services to be overseen through regular review of their EHCP, holding LCHS to account for the therapeutic interventions provided, thereby strengthening the Local Authority's position as a commissioning authority.

## **1. Background**

The proposed alternative model recommends pupils with complex or severe speech and/or language needs remain within their local primary school and continue to be educated in this setting, whilst receiving short term intensive therapeutic services to support them in fulfilling their potential.

The model addresses a number of parental concerns as stated within this report including the removal of their child from the local school roll, the ability to place back at the same school and the significant travelling requirements placed upon young children.

Through effective partnership working, LCHS, the four Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the LA will be required to work together to enhance the SLT outreach support service into mainstream primary schools to support children with complex speech and/or language needs, enabling them to flourish in a mainstream school setting. The revised model will strengthen the resources within LCHS for specialist speech and language support and the Specialist Teaching Service to meet the required demands across the county through providing outreach teaching support services into local primary schools.

## **Summary of the Revised Provision from SLT**

The enhanced provision of Speech and Language support will embody the same principles as that as provided through the ECLIPS model, where support will be provided by Speech and Language Therapists and Specialist Teachers on an outreach basis into mainstream primary settings.

The aim of the service is to meet the needs of the local authority and its partners and the needs of students aged 5-11 in primary schools with a severe specific speech or language impairment. It reduces the need for students to go to specialist units or into alternative provision inside and outside the County, providing a cost effective solution which allows learners to study closer to home, which is better for the student and their family and consistent with the local authority policy.

This is a service where Lincolnshire County Council requires additional input from South West Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group via their contract with Lincolnshire Community Health Services (LCHS) in relation to speech and language therapy, which is not a Local Authority function.

### **Main Objectives:-**

The main objectives of the agreement between the LA, the CCG and LCHS are as follows:-

- To provide strategic information and advice to the LA with regard to its legal duties in relation to part 4 of the 1996 Education Act and to represent the authority at SEND Tribunals and provide professional evidence to the same within the expertise level of the Speech and Language Therapist and in accordance with their own profession's guidelines.
- To provide a full range of speech and language therapy to identified students, working with Head-teacher's and liaising with key contacts in designated maintained or other type of independently state funded primary schools, including Academy and Free Schools, and the SEND strategic and operational working groups to ensure that students' needs are met within Lincolnshire.
- To work directly with named students who have 'Enhanced Plus' provision agreed by the LA as the appropriate provision.
- To build capacity in mainstream maintained primary schools and Academies in meeting the needs of students with speech, language & communication needs, focussing on those schools which have students with significant language needs, but not identified as being in specific need of focussed 'Enhanced Plus' provision.

### **Description of scheme**

The provision of a therapeutic speech and language outreach service to identified children in primary schools (as outlined above) and to children in independent and

non-maintained schools only where an 'Enhanced Plus' provision has been agreed with the Local Authority.

The provision will be delivered by qualified and HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council) registered Speech and Language Therapists. The therapists will hold a degree or equivalent professional qualification in Speech and Language Therapy and be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council. They will possess the competencies and relevant experience to fulfil the requirements of the role and will receive the appropriate clinical supervision to enable them to fulfil it.

To ensure that clinical time is maximised and travelling kept to a minimum, and to enable IT access and professional peer support, the Speech and Language Therapists will be based at NHS premises close to their area of work (it should be noted the sites could be subject to change in response to fluctuating demands). Up to 10% of their time may be spent on duties at the schools hosting joint planning, Individual Education Plan (IEP) and strategy meetings with school staff and Specialist Teachers, depending on need.

Speech and language therapy duties are split into primary and secondary duties. Priority will be given to primary duties.

### Primary Duties

Primary duties will include the following:

- Work in partnership with local authority officers.
- Work closely with the pupil, parents, teacher and teaching assistants to secure relevant planning and differentiation.
- Undertake individual assessments and, with others, develop, monitor and evaluate programmes.
- Work with staff on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and, where appropriate, contribute to reviews.
- Deliver training in speech, language & communication needs to relevant professionals.
- Support students through their primary education in a variety of settings.
- Support student's transition from primary school to secondary education.
- The provision of a telephone helpline and email support.
- To provide appropriate courses during the year to be held at a central location.
- To provide necessary reporting back to the LA in respect of services provided including number of pupils accessing 'Enhanced Plus', contacts made, breakdown of costs, qualitative feedback and training sessions completed

### Secondary Duties

These duties focus on building capacity primarily in primary school settings although some work may be required in other settings, in meeting the needs of students with speech, language and communication needs. The work will be targeted towards those primary schools which have children with significant speech

and/or language needs and identified as being in specific need of focussed 'Enhanced Plus' provision.

Secondary duties to include the following:

- Work closely with teachers and teaching assistants to secure relevant planning and differentiation across the setting
- Advise others on appropriate tools and resources to support successful assessment and intervention
- Work with staff on how to draft effective IEP's for children with speech, language and communication needs and to review those as agreed
- Provide training to relevant professionals in speech, language & communication needs.

Where an area of the provision is not achieving the desired outcomes, this element of the service will be reviewed and the focus changed through mutual agreement.

### **Total Costs for Current and Proposed Service**

Whilst consideration is being given to providing this service in the most cost effective way this is not the sole driver for this recommendation. Both the LA and LCHS are committed to ensuring we provide the best support to meet the needs of children within their local community.

#### **1. Costs for Educational Provision (funded by Dedicated Schools Grant - DSG)**

At present the LA funds the educational provision at the three identified schools to the sum of £360K (for the full year 2015/16) based on the number of commissioned places originally agreed for the three schools. If places are below the agreed numbers top up funding is removed in line with the DfE requirements.

There are 23 children covered by this service at the schools and the current projected net annual cost based on this number of placements for 2016/17 is approx. £261K. This is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This funding will be realigned to support the required transition arrangements to the new operational model, and any associated costs to provide the higher 'Enhanced Plus' provision i.e. 3 Specialist Teaching posts (costs in the region of £128,800 based on an average salary with on costs of £46K at 2.8 FTE).

From the reduced costs achieved, funding will be used to strengthen both SLT and Specialist Teaching provision to meet the needs of both those children in the units and those children currently based within mainstream primary schools where they are presently not receiving a higher level of support, but may meet the threshold for provision under the recommended alternative model.

Overall, the costs for the new model will be cost neutral.

Where a child is assessed and approved for an EHCP under the 2013/14 School Funding Reforms, schools will be required to fund any enhanced provision from

their allocated SEND funding. Enhanced provision will be provided from Specialist Teachers through the LA and top up funding will be provided, where required, to ensure adequate provision for identified children is provided. At present only 2 of the children based in the units are being progressed through an EHCP.

## 2. Costs for Transport Provision (funded by Home to School Transport Budget)

Children's Services currently incurs costs for transport in the region of £125K p.a. This can be broken down as follows:

<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Daily transport costs</b>	<b>School Year transport costs</b>
Fosse Way, Lincoln	£230.00	£44,850.00
Mablethorpe Primary	£249.33	£48,619.35
Monkshouse, Spalding	£165.57	£32,286.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>£644.90</b>	<b>£125,755.50</b>

As many parents have stated they wish for their child to remain in the school within which they are currently on roll, the LA have agreed to continue to fund costs for transport until the child leaves the school (into either an alternative primary or secondary school). The costs for transport will therefore reduce over the course of the time the children remain within their current educational placement.

Taking into account the current age profile of the children at the schools, and their expected transition to secondary, the transport costs will reduce as follows:

	<b>Cumulative Reduction in Pupil Numbers</b>	<b>Cumulative Reduction in Transport costs</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage Reduction in Transport costs</b>
	<b>23</b>	<b>£125,755</b>	
Year 1 (2016/17)	-1	£5,468	4%
Year 2 (2017/18)	-6	£32,806	26%
Year 3 (2018/19)	-12	£65,611	52%
Year 4 (2019/20)	-17	£92,949	74%
Year 5 (2020/21)	-22	£120,287	96%

The final pupil has only just commenced in year 1 so will not leave until Year 6.

## 3. Costs for Speech and Language Provision (currently funded by Health)

The funding for this element of the service, provided through LCHS, is approximately £69,000 (for the period 01/04/2015 to 31/03/2016). As stated in point 1 above, it is anticipated additional funding will be required to meet future needs for both the existing cohort of 23 children and any children within mainstream primary settings who are eligible for the 'Enhanced Plus' service and

will require a higher level of input from SLT and Specialist Teachers than that currently being received. Overall this model will still remain cost neutral.

If the service is not fully delivered, or is not on target to be fully delivered by the end of the agreement period, due to, for example, insufficient staff; Lincolnshire County Council will vary payment to the provider accordingly.

### **Service Provision Pathway**

It has already been agreed that no new admissions will be made into the units at the schools. Any children requiring enhanced plus support will need to follow the pathway as agreed below:

- Where a child is identified with a speech and/or language need a referral will be made to LCHS to assess the needs of the individual and support will be provided in line with the LCHS standard support model (i.e. 'basic' support provision).
- If a child fails to make appropriate progress in speech and/or language development, LCHS will appoint a specialist therapist who will reassess their needs. Support will be provided by outreach through the 'Enhanced' SLT provision (i.e. up to 20 contacts within the mainstream primary setting).
- Continued failure to make progress will result in a strategy meeting being held with appropriate professionals and led by LCHS including the child and their parents and carers as necessary. If it is deemed the child will only be able to make further progress through additional intensive support, they will then be referred for an EHCP assessment.
- The appropriate pathway for assessment for an EHCP will then need to be progressed and if agreed will lead to the provision of a suitable plan to meet the child's needs, including the provision of intensive SLT support through the 'Enhanced Plus' service.
- The 'Enhanced Plus' provision will be 'needs led', with input from appropriate professionals required to enable a strong and clear support plan to be put in place with defined and measurable outcomes.
- The achievement of the required outcomes within the EHCP will be reviewed at least termly with professionals and parents/carers and the child, and formally reported back and reflected within the child's annual EHCP review.
- At any point, if the child has made sufficient progress in speech, language and communication, they would revert back to receiving either the basic or enhanced support provision from LCHS or exit the pathway as the provision of support is no longer necessary or required.

### **Transition for Schools and Children**

Pupils and their parents have been provided with an option to either remain on school roll at one of the three schools highlighted or to apply for an alternative school place nearer to their home. Where a child remains on roll in their current school, therapeutic support for SLT will no longer be provided through a unit at that school but will be provided through the 'Enhanced Plus' model into the mainstream primary setting. For the latter, focused SLT and school admission support will be

provided to reintegrate the child's placement back into their local community primary school.

The specialist teachers in each of the units will need to be consulted with on a potential transfer to or TUPE into the Local Authority's Specialist Teaching Service. As these staff are direct employees of the provider schools it will be necessary for these schools to obtain advice from their own HR providers to progress any required consultation with affected staff.

Local mainstream primary schools will be responsible for providing support to pupils through their notional special needs funding. Where the needs of the child are unable to be met by the school they can follow the pathway for assessment for an EHCP, which if approved, would provide appropriate additional resources and funding to the school to support the child's needs. Schools would be required to work with LCHS where intensive support is required and obtain advice and guidance on specialist teaching strategies from the Specialist Teaching Service.

This model therefore provides support for children with complex speech and/or language needs within their own local community school and for those pupils with more complex educational support needs to follow the appropriate pathway for an EHC plan.

### ***Development of a local based approach***

Not all children with identified complex speech and/or language difficulties are placed at the identified schools. In fact some parents and carers object to this and support is provided into the local community primary school. This model will be developed and built upon.

Many primary schools across Lincolnshire are successful in supporting children with complex SLT needs. The recommendation for this alternative model of SLT provision has taken into account the need to meet children's needs as much as possible within a local mainstream setting. In addition the recommendation promotes inclusion for children within their local community and local school, ensuring more localised provision reducing unnecessary travel.

It is essential that we build on the requirement for improved partnership working within school localities to ensure children's needs are met. The recommendation strengthens the current SLT outreach support model provided by LCHS and through LA Specialist Teachers into mainstream primary schools and the ECLIPS model of provision within secondary settings, to provide children with intensive support, where required.

### ***Increased accessibility and choice***

This recommendation removes the need for a child to be taken off the roll of their current school and placed on roll of the receiving/intake school (i.e. the primary school with the unit provision). It removes initial parent/carer concerns who may not wish for their child to attend one of the identified schools and for them to remain on roll at their current mainstream primary school due to locality or siblings attending the same school.

In addition, if children can be educated in a local primary school, and build a network of friends, this will support their future transition into secondary local provision as they will be moving on with some of their peer group.

Increased local support provision (education and therapy) within mainstream primary settings addresses concerns over transportation and time spent going to and from school in a taxi.

***Adoption of a commissioned approach***

The new model ensures the providers are held to account in respect of performance or outcomes for these children. LCHS will be required to robustly track and report on progression of pupil's speech and/or language against a range of outcomes, which will be specified within their EHCP.

It is essential the LA has oversight of commissioned outcomes from the services it funds and improved accountability frameworks and reporting on outcomes for education and health progress will be demonstrated and evidenced.

**Equality Act 2010**

The Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 needs to be taken into account by the Executive when coming to a decision.

The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it: Equality Act 2010 section 149(1).

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that is different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

The relevant protected characteristics are:

- ❖ Age
- ❖ Disability
- ❖ Gender reassignment
- ❖ Pregnancy and maternity
- ❖ Race
- ❖ Religion or belief
- ❖ Sex
- ❖ Sexual orientation

A reference to conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act includes a reference to:

- ❖ A breach of an equality clause or rule
- ❖ A breach of a non-discrimination rule

This duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision making process.

An Equality Impact Analysis has been carried out and is attached at Appendix C. Potential adverse impacts and mitigating actions are identified in the Appendix.

Overall, however, individuals who have protected characteristics should experience an accessible service regardless of the changes made. Accessibility means that first and foremost they have easy access to the service and that the service offered has equal regard in terms of supporting their individual needs and aspirations. The provider will be required to have policies and procedures in place and have staff sufficiently trained in their responsibilities in regard to the Equality Act. An integral part of the provider monitoring will be to look at where individuals have experienced negative outcomes, looks at trends and whether there is any association with protected characteristics. As a result policies and procedures must be changed and regularly reviewed to minimise any negative impact.

The service being proposed by its nature seeks to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Furthermore significant benefits can be identified in respect of fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, since children will be educated in a mainstream setting within their local communities.

### **Child Poverty Strategy**

The Council is under a duty in the exercise of its functions to have regard to its Child Poverty Strategy. Child poverty is one of the key risk factors that can negatively influence a child's life chances. Children that live in poverty are at greater risk of social exclusion which, in turn, can lead to poor outcomes for the individual and for society as a whole.

In Lincolnshire we consider that poverty is not only a matter of having limited financial resources but that it is also about the ability of families to access the means of lifting themselves out of poverty and of having the aspiration to do so. The following four key strategic themes form the basis of Lincolnshire's Child Poverty strategy: Economic Poverty, Poverty of Access, Poverty of Aspiration and Best Use of Resources.

The Strategy has been taken into account in this instance and the following comments are made:

#### Poverty of Aspiration

These services will provide expert support to children and young people and will support them to be healthy and happy in their early years and help to ensure that when at school that they are fully supported with any physical or emotional wellbeing issues they may experience.

#### Best use of Resources

Best use of Resources aims to ensure that all key stakeholders contribute to improving the life chances of children and young people in a coordinated way. This ensures that resources are used in the most effective and appropriate way across county to meet the needs of children.

### **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

The Lincolnshire JSNA identifies a number of needs that directly relate to young people. These services will support children and young people in the following ways under the themes of the JSNA.

#### Be Healthy

These services will help to ensure that all children and young people can be happy and healthy, fulfil their potential, and can address areas of concern with trained health professionals.

#### Stay Safe

Speech and Language Therapy and Specialist Teaching staff are required to undertake regular safeguarding training and maintain a high focus on keeping children and young people as safe as they can be.

## Health & Well Being Strategy

The Lincolnshire Health & Well Being Strategy includes five main themes, the following of which are relevant to these services:

### Promote healthier lifestyles

These services offer support to children and young people to enable them to maximise their physical and emotional health.

### Improve health and social outcomes for children and reduce inequalities

These services will support children and young people so that it improves their general health and social outcomes.

### Deliver high quality systematic care for major causes of ill health and disability

These services will provide expert health care by trained speech and language therapists to children and young people from 5-11 years of age.

## 2. Conclusion

Based on the drivers as detailed within the consultation document and the feedback received, the direction of travel for Lincolnshire remains to promote localised services, supporting improved choice, which are in the best interest of local children and their parents or carers. The recommendation is for the Executive Councillor to approve an alternative model of service delivery focusing on the enhanced provision of outreach services for speech and language and specialist teaching services into mainstream primary schools so increasing opportunities to promote inclusion of those children with significant speech and language difficulties within their local community.

## 3. Legal Comments:

The Council has the power to adopt the alternative service delivery model set out in the Report. In arriving at the recommendation a consultation process has been undertaken which has taken into account feedback received. The consultation responses must be conscientiously taken into account to make a decision in accordance with the recommendation.

The proposal is consistent with the policy Framework and within the remit of the Executive Councillor.

## 4. Resource Comments:

Financial implications will arise from the decision of the Executive Councillor on the proposal to discontinue the speech and language unit services across three of Lincolnshire's schools from the 1st September 2016, and to proceed to implement an alternative model for 'enhanced plus' speech and language services.

A transitional funding agreement will need to be agreed with each school concerned, but it is anticipated that the existing funding can be recycled to meet the transition arrangements to the new operational model, and the cost of the new enhanced plus provision. This will deliver more effective use of resources in the long-term (including transport costs) whilst allowing pupils to stay in their local school.

## **5. Consultation**

Formal consultation with all Lincolnshire schools ended on 22 April 2016. At the same time 3 parent/carer engagement sessions were undertaken in Bourne, Lincoln and Louth to enable parents and carers to discuss the proposed model and to provide feedback.

Appendix A provides a summary of the feedback received from Schools during the consultation.

Appendix B provides details of feedback received from both current and previous parents/carers of children who are and have attended the identified schools.

### **Summary of Feedback**

#### Schools Feedback:

- 17 individual responses were received from Schools
- Separating the responses from the three identified schools: 8 responses were received:
  - 4 were in favour of the proposal, 3 against and 1 neither for/or against.
  - 7 of the responses were from Primary Schools, 1 from a Special School and Nil from Secondary Schools
- From the three Schools who currently host the SLT units a total of 9 responses were received. Feedback received ranged from TA's to Head-teachers and a Governor. All 9 responses were against the proposal contained within the consultation
- In total 70% of feedback did not support the proposed change to provision.

#### Parent/Carer Engagement:

- Only 2 parent groups attended the engagement sessions provided across the county (Louth)
- 14 parents have responded to the consultation and advised the LA of which school they would like their child to remain in;
  - 13 have requested their child stays in the current school
  - 1 wishes their child to be placed at an alternative local school
- 8 parents have not yet responded and have now been written to asking for an urgent response to where they would like their child to be placed. The Specialist Teachers at the identified schools have also been asked to assist in obtaining this feedback

- 6 parents/relatives of children who were previously at the identified schools have also provided feedback.

**Note:** 2 children at the Spalding school are from the same family hence why there are 23 children but only 22 responses required.

**Written Responses in the Consultation Period on the proposed change to the delivery model for Speech and Language therapeutic services**

Schools	For	Against	Neither For/Against
Primary	4	2	1
Special		1	
Secondary			
Monks House		3	
Fosse Way		4	
Mablethorpe		2	
	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>

**Written Responses from engagement during the Consultation Period on the proposed change to the delivery model for Speech and Language therapeutic services**

Parents/Carers	For	Against	Neither For/Against
Parents/Carers	1	7	1
Previous parents/carers		6	
	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>

\* for 8 pupils

**a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?**

Not Applicable.

**b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?**

Yes the Executive Councillor has been involved in the discussions regarding the proposal for the LA and LCHS to provide an alternative enhanced SLT model through local mainstream primary settings on an outreach basis.

**c) Scrutiny Comments**

The consultation proposals were presented to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 15 April 2016. The following comments made by the Committee were noted.

- That the enhanced service would involve a number sessions, which would be needs led;
- That current staffing would be absorbed, but some specialist teachers would be brought in to provide the service;
- The Committee was advised that at the moment, officers were unable to provide details of the final service model as this was still being worked up;
- One member enquired what provision would be made for deaf children. The Committee was reassured that provision would be made for children with hearing impairment;
- It was noted that by commissioning the intensive speech and language service through the Lincolnshire Health and Community Services (LCHS), the Local Authority would have the ability to oversee the outcomes for children with speech and language complex needs, and hold the LCHS to account for the therapeutic interventions provided, thereby strengthening the Local Authority's position as a commissioning authority. Members welcomed the accountability;
- Some concern was raised as to whether the Local Authority was capable of providing an improved service to all schools, due to the geographical spread of the County, and the need for more experienced personnel. The Committee was reassured that the improved provision would be possible; and
- Clarification was sought as to who would be funding the improved service. The Committee was advised that the service was currently funded by the Local Authority.

These comments have been considered and reflected upon within this final recommendation within this report.

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee will consider this report at its meeting on 27 May 2016. Comments from the Committee will be reported to the Executive Councillor.

#### **d) Policy Proofing Actions Required**

An Equality Impact Analysis has been completed and is discussed in the Report and attached at Appendix C.

### **6. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Written Responses in the Consultation Period on the proposed change to the delivery model for Speech and Language therapeutic services
Appendix B	Written Responses from engagement during the Consultation Period on the proposed change to the delivery model for Speech and Language therapeutic services
Appendix C	SLT Equality Impact Analysis Form

## 7. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Consultation on the Future Provision of Dedicated Speech and Language Units (March 2016)	A copy of the report can be obtained on request from SEND

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