

Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy, Interim Director – Education

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| Report to: | Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee |
| Date: | 18 October 2019 |
| Subject: | Update on the Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy |

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee with an update on the implementation of the Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy, approved by the Executive on 6 November 2018. The report summarises the progress made within the Capital Programme and in all supporting system areas.

Actions Required:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the content of this report and comment on progress made.

1. Background

In March 2017, the Department for Education (DfE) announced the High Needs Strategic Review, instructed all Local Authorities (LA's) to review provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in order to ensure that there are sufficient good school places which meet the changing needs of pupils with SEND. The review required LA's to work in close collaboration with special schools and parent and carer groups to co-produce a strategic plan which delivers sustainable, good quality provision to meet current and future needs.

Locally, Education Leaders recognised significant challenges within the existing provision and all agreed that the status quo could not remain. Increased demand on a limited number of school places, excessively long journeys for a significant number of pupils, the potentially detrimental impact of some Out of County placements on families and the need for significant improvements to some special school buildings have all led to sector leaders identifying the need for change.

A shared response was required to these significant challenges and collaboration of School Leaders and the Parent/Carer Forum was identified as the foundation for developing an effective solution. With a commitment to developing a sustainable, inclusive and localised special education system, Special School Leaders, Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum (LPCF) and the LA co-produced the Building

Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy and have formed a collaboration to oversee the strategy's implementation.

In November 2018, the Executive granted approval to implement the Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy. Implementation of this strategy commenced in January 2019 and will take place over the next five years with the final school changes being made in September 2024. This date differs from the original proposed completion date due to the outcome of DfE decision making around the proposed new free school, which will be explained later within this report.

The strategy will make significant changes to the existing special education provision, creating an integrated and sustainable school system where pupils can attend their nearest special school, confident that their education and health needs can be fully met.

In order to achieve this ambition, the strategy will provide a locality-based, sector-wide approach to special education which will enable all special schools to meet the wide range of needs of pupils within their local community. As existing special schools are designed to meet specific designations of need, each school has obtained approval to change its designation to enable them to meet All Needs. In addition, the strategy will significantly increase the special school estate to address existing overcrowding issues and the growing demand, through capital investment to support expansion, in line with projected need. The allocated capital investment will be utilised to improve premises and facilities, enabling each school to offer places to pupils from within their local communities with All Needs.

All special schools have committed to making significant changes to the type of need catered for and expansion where this has been identified and these are outlined in the strategy. All 14 Special Schools will be able to meet “all needs” once implementation is complete.

Progress Update

1. Capital Programme

This report provides an update on the first ten months of delivery of the capital programme. Therefore the majority of schemes are still in their infancy with feasibility and early stages of design being the focus for the first cohort of schools. Corporate Property has been commissioned to deliver the programme by Children's Services, and the directorates are working closely in partnership with schools and contractors to bring each scheme to fruition.

An overview of the SEND schools outline programme can be viewed in Appendix A.

Boston John Fielding School

In line with projected need, the new Boston John Fielding School is being developed with a capacity of 140, providing an additional 84 special school places

for children and young people with SEND in the Boston area. A site located adjacent to the current Boston St Nicholas Primary School has been identified as the location for the new school. Collaborative work between Corporate Property, the contractor and the Academy Trust has commenced to ensure the school design will deliver a suitable building which will ensure all needs provision can be delivered.

Feasibility and design for this scheme has been undertaken and planning permission has been submitted (July 2019) with the aim of gaining consent in early November 2019. It is intended that the contractor will begin work on site in early 2020, with the new building being completed by May 2021, for September 2021 opening.

Please see Appendix B for an image of the proposed new school building.

In preparation for planning, a pre-planning engagement session for local residents and families of children attending both The John Fielding School and St Nicholas Primary School was held. In addition, families with children who live in Boston but attend a special school other than The John Fielding School were invited to raise awareness of the plans and future additional places. Responses from the event have been included in the planning application. Further engagement sessions are planned for October 2019.

Bourne Willoughby School

In line with projected need, Bourne Willoughby School will expand to a capacity of 148 on its existing site, providing an additional 68 school places. Building plans include a new classroom block, some internal remodelling, enhanced car parking facilities and improvements to school bus drop off and pick up. The planned improvements to the external facilities have been designed to have a positive impact on traffic build up in the surrounding area during peak times.

Feasibility and design for this scheme has been undertaken and planning permission will be submitted towards the end of September. The contractor is forecasting to be on site from Spring 2020 and completing all works by June 2021.

Please see Appendices C and D for images of the proposed new block.

In preparation for planning, a pre-planning engagement session was held for local residents, staff and families of children attending Bourne Willoughby School. In addition, families with children who live in Bourne area but attend a different special school were invited to raise awareness of the plans and future additional places. Responses from the event were positive and will be included in the planning application.

Spilsby Eresby School

In line with projected need, Spilsby Eresby School will be subject to remodelling and redevelopment which will enable a minimum of 84 pupils to attend this school.

Feasibility and design for this scheme is in progress, which will provide the school with a new teaching block and some internal remodelling. It will also benefit from a new entrance that will allow a one way flow of traffic to significantly enhance the drop off and pick up of pupils and increase parking numbers for staff and visitors. It is planned that this will have a positive impact on the surrounding highway and improve access for local residents.

Please see Appendices E and F for images of the proposed new block.

Planning permission will be submitted towards the end of October 2019 with the contractor forecasting to be on site from Spring 2020 and completing works by June 2021. A pre-planning engagement session will be held in October 2019 and all responses included in the planning submission.

Horncastle St Lawrence School

In line with projected need, St Lawrence School will expand to provide spaces for an additional 70 pupils on the existing site.

A feasibility report has been produced which proposes the demolition of a defunct boarding block to the rear of the school and this will be replaced with a new teaching block. In the coming months the design will be developed further with the school, with planning permission being submitted in early 2020.

It is intended that all proposed works at St Lawrence School will be completed by August 2021, enabling the school to be operational from the Autumn term, 2021.

Louth St Bernard's School

In line with projected need, St Bernard's School will be subject to an expansion to enable a minimum of 100 pupils to be educated on the existing site.

A feasibility report has been produced which will see the demolition of a defunct boarding block in the centre of the school and replaced with new teaching accommodation. The Short Breaks provision sited at St Bernard's School will be maintained during the project.

It is intended that this scheme will be completed by August 2022.

Lincoln Free School/ Lincoln St Christopher's School

Lincolnshire's application for a new special free school submitted to the Department for Education in October 2018 was unsuccessful. This information was received by the Local Authority in March 2019 and, as a result, it has been necessary to review all alternative options available, to create increased special school capacity for Lincoln City. An extensive options appraisal was undertaken and presented for consideration. This report concluded that the most suitable option to ensure Lincoln City has sufficient special school places, is to expand the current LA maintained St Christopher's School over two sites, with a new capacity of 333 overall. In order to ensure adequate space and facilities for this number of

pupils, it would be necessary to develop a new primary facility on a second site (proposed to be the former Usher School site, Skellingthorpe Road) with a capacity of 130 and provide extensive remodelling and development to the existing St Christopher's School to create a secondary provision with a capacity of 203.

As this involves an LA maintained school, Lincolnshire County Council is both the proposer and the decision maker of any significant changes. Therefore, subject to Executive Councillor decision, this proposal will proceed to Statutory Notification and Representation Period for formal consultation in October/November 2019. This proposal will be brought to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for consideration and recommendation on 17 January 2020 before proceeding to the Executive for final decision on 4 February 2020.

This proposal is currently subject to informal consultation which commenced on 5 September 2019 and this will run for four weeks. A consultation engagement session was held on 16 September 2019 for families of pupils attending St Christopher's School and staff and all contributions will be included in future decision papers.

Subject to approval, it is intended that the primary school will be completed by September 2022. The existing school will then be remodelled to provide secondary education. It is anticipated that all the works will be completed by September 2024. These dates represent a delay of up to 12 months due to the unsuccessful free school application and the requirement to reconsider and consult on a new proposal.

All other Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) delivered schemes will come on line as the implementation of the strategy progresses, as can be seen in Appendix A.

Community Inclusive Trust (CIT) Self Delivery Projects

The following schemes (excluding The Priory) have all received Condition Improvement Funding (CIF) from the Department for Education (DfE) and self-delivery by the Trust has been approved. The Local Authority has made an additional financial contribution to the self-delivery projects to ensure all needs can be met at all CIT Academies. The Trust is working with Corporate Property to ensure their expansion plans are in accordance with the SEND strategy. Project Managers from Corporate Property and Officers from Children's Services monitor and provide support for the duration of the schemes.

Grantham Ambergate Sports College / The Sandon School

Projected need dictates a requirement for a minimum of 229 special school places in the Grantham area and the approved strategy cited that The Sandon School and Ambergate Sports College would become one school operating over two sites with sufficient places to meet all needs.

During the design phase, CIT identified that the two school sites were not large enough to deliver all needs provision for 229 pupils. An additional site in Grantham (Stornoway - owned by CIT as part of the Greenfields School acquisition) was

identified as a potential solution to the limited site size. A comprehensive options appraisal was undertaken and the outcome agreed was to develop post-16 provision for Grantham, on the new site, allowing existing post-16 spaces to be used for primary and secondary education. This will ensure the Trust can meet all needs education for its pupils.

CIT are currently delivering this programme and it is anticipated that these schemes will be completed by September 2021.

Spalding The Garth School / The Priory School

CIT will also be self-delivering the development of Spalding The Garth School, whilst Corporate Property will be delivering the solution for Spalding The Priory School as this is a more complex scheme and Corporate Property are better suited to deliver this.

In line with the approved strategy, these two schools will become one operating over two sites with a capacity of 177. Both schemes are due for completion by September 2022. CIT has commenced feasibility for The Garth School whilst the implementation of The Priory scheme will commence in due course.

2. Children and Young People with Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH)

In July 2019, a residential was facilitated to progress the development of a clear strategy for the educational provision for children and young people with SEMH. This residential provided sector leaders with the opportunity to consider how far the approved strategy met the needs of this cohort and what, if any, additional provision is required to ensure pupils with a primary need of SEMH can fulfil their potential in Lincolnshire schools. The residential was well-attended and generated aspirational thinking and a strong sense of commitment to ensuring all SEMH needs can be met.

In response to the residential, all existing workstreams have been tasked to reconsider their original brief from the perspective of a child with SEMH and ensure their proposals can fully meet the needs of this cohort. A writing group has also been established to develop Lincolnshire's strategy for SEMH needs which will be developed in line with the already approved Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy. This group will develop a model of provision which ensures children and young people with SEMH can access education, health and care at the right time, in the right place, as close to home as possible.

These groups have been tasked to produce Lincolnshire's SEMH strategic vision for LCC approval by September 2020. The Committee will be updated of progress in due course.

3. Satellite Provision

The proposed model for satellite provision is being developed within the Design workstream. Representatives from mainstream and special education and LA Officers have collaborated to develop an aspirational model for satellite provision which will enable children and young people attending special school to have access to a wider curriculum and greater mainstream opportunities. The proposed model for satellite provision will also support greater transition from special school to mainstream school for those pupils who have the potential to achieve academic qualifications, with more tailored support.

Interest from mainstream schools to host these satellites has been substantial, with 14 mainstream schools formally expressing their interest and a number of others keen to understand the implications before committing. Mainstream engagement in the workstream has been high and, once the model is launched, the LA anticipates further expressions of interest from mainstream partners.

The satellite workstream has been tasked with considering the possible utilisation of satellite provision for children and young people with SEMH needs. Once this task is complete, a final paper will be submitted to the Project Board proposing the preferred satellite model for approval. This paper will be considered by the Board in December 2019, with the intention of initial stages of implementation commencing in Spring Term 2020.

4. Community Led Panels

The Design workstream has been tasked with creating a mechanism for sector-led challenge to ensure that Lincolnshire children have access to the right education, health and care at the right time, in the right place as close to home as possible. At present, children and young people with SEND may be placed on Home Tuition or be educated in Out of County provision, as there are not enough school places or local special schools state that they cannot meet need. In order to ensure that this does not continue, it was agreed that each locality needed to ensure that all schools acknowledge ownership and responsibility for this group of children and should work together to ensure school places were available to all students as close to home as possible.

A model of delivery has been approved, namely the development of Specialist Community Led Panels for each locality to meet the needs of children and young people requiring a special school place at the right time as close to home as possible.

The panels will seek to identify a local special school place for the following cohort, through solution-focused discussion and peer challenge:

- A child/young person residing in Lincolnshire with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who is at the local special school setting but school states they are struggling to meet need.

- A child/young person has a recently finalised EHCP recommending specialist provision and, following consultation, the local special school feel unable to meet need.
- A child/young person has an EHCP and moves in from another area and local special school queries being able to meet need.
- A child/young person is identified as requiring an Out of County placement as local special school queries being able to meet need.
- A child/young person is at risk of permanent exclusion from a local special school.

This model is currently being reviewed to ensure that children and young people with SEMH needs are incorporated into Specialist Community Led Panels. The revised model will be considered by the Project Board in October 2019, with a view to launching a pilot of the panels in early 2020.

5. Health

The Health workstream has sought to develop robust partnership working across the Local Authority, Health Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups to ensure an effective health offer can be provided to all special schools. This workstream has made significant progress in developing the health offer including the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between schools and health providers, setting out clear expectations around provision. This MOU is due for consideration and approval by the Project Board in October 2019.

In addition, the health needs of children and young people with SEMH should be met in schools as far as possible and this will be incorporated into the final model of delivery, also due to be considered at October's Project Board.

6. Specialist Equipment Contract

In order to ensure the most effective use of specialist medical and therapy equipment, all special schools have agreed to join the existing contractual arrangements held by the Local Authority with specialist equipment providers. This is currently being facilitated and will be in place by April 2020.

7. Workforce Development

The Workforce Development workstream was established to develop a coordinated, sector-led approach to professional development to ensure all pupils with SEND can access a quality education in the right place, as close to home as possible. The group has been tasked with developing a learning model which can provide all school staff with access to a training framework for SEND, mapping existing SEND training provision to ensure they are aligned to the proposed framework and consider how recruitment and retention can be improved to support the increase in special school places.

In order to ensure this workforce model provides quality training for all teaching and non-teaching staff, the decision was taken to place the design of this model with the Lincolnshire Teaching Together (Teaching Schools Alliance). A proposed

model has been developed in collaboration with Learn and Inspire Teaching Schools, special and mainstream school leaders and key stakeholders. This model was considered by the July 2019 Project Board and further recommendations have been made. One key recommendation is to ensure all training needs around SEMH issues are included. The board also tasked the workstream to consider further evidence-based practice and quality assurance along with ensuring families have access to the training platform. The model is being reviewed to incorporate all recommendations and will be resubmitted to the Project Board in due course.

It is anticipated that phase one of the workforce development model will be available to access by September 2020.

2. Conclusion

In the initial implementation period, significant progress has been made across the capital investment programme with eight out of fourteen schools actively engaged in feasibility and design of their planned development. In accordance with the outlined programme, six schools will be all needs operational by Autumn term 2021 with at least two more schools coming on line in 2022. Whilst there has been a delay identified to the final delivery on St Christopher's School due to the unsuccessful special free school bid, the whole strategic vision will still be implemented in five years from approval as set out in the original strategy.

In order for all schools to be all needs operational, the identified support systems of workforce development, health offer and SEND design must be established in advance of the first all needs school opening. It is therefore essential that the proposed models developed by the workstreams come to fruition over the next academic year to ensure that they are well-established and embedded into the system. The supporting systems have been developed collaboratively with sector experts from the Local Authority, mainstream and special schools and LPCF to ensure that they fully meet the needs of all Lincolnshire children with SEND and their families. These models will all reach the stage of being presented for final approval from the Project Board before the end of 2019 so considered implementation can proceed throughout 2020.

3. Consultation

The outcome of the consultation for the Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy was considered by Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in October 2018.

Further consultation regarding the proposed amendments to the strategy involving Lincoln St Christopher's School will be presented to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in January 2020, following formal consultation on the aforementioned proposal.

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

Yes.

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

Available from SEND Project Office.

4. Appendices

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| These are listed below and attached at the back of the report | |
| Appendix A | Capital Programme Summary |
| Appendix B | Design - Boston John Fielding School |
| Appendix C | Design – Bourne Willoughby School 1 |
| Appendix D | Design - Bourne Willoughby School 2 |
| Appendix E | Design – Spilsby Eresby 1 |
| Appendix F | Design – Spilsby Eresby 2 |

5. Background Papers

| Document title | Where the document can be viewed |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Executive Report November 2018 | http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=121&MId=4973&Ver=4 |

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