

## Appendix A2 - Background analysis to the proposals

The proposals in this paper seek to reverse the decline in the delivery of day to day business and ensure that there is sufficient resource available during and beyond this recovery period to sustainably embed the area's strategic business in order to achieve the cultural change the LGA18 notes is needed and summarises as "Move away from 'what are we doing?' to 'what difference are we making and how do we know?'" The outcomes required to deliver this cultural change, with the attendant resourcing implications, can be identified under the following headings:

- a. Delivery of statutory assessment and review under sections 36 and 44 of CFA14 –the SEND Improvement programme - will address the much needed changes to the arrangements for High Needs funding, requesting and making assessments, issuing and reviewing plans and supporting schools to deliver a coherent and inclusive graduated response to SEND. Without the need for these changes there is insufficient capacity within the authority to bring needs assessment, and EHC reviews within statutory timescales and deliver an outcome focussed person centred service. This paper proposes increases in staffing in the SEND Assessment Team, and Educational Psychology (for both assessment and preventative work).
- b. Management of disputes, mediations and appeals under sections 51 to 59 - probable changes to the way in which the authority delivers services and provision to SEND are likely to generate increased challenge from parents and carers. Properly managed this is an opportunity for the area to showcase a cultural shift in its understanding of the SEND Reforms and its approach to interactions with services users. It is recommended that the area dedicate resource to the management and avoidance of formal challenge and appeals the SEND Tribunal. This paper recommends an 'early intervention' officer who will liaise with parent carers on complex matters with an emphasis on dispute avoidance, and reducing pressure on senior officers in the SEND assessment team.
- c. Good management and reporting of the local authority's resources - changes to the way in which the authority delivers its statutory duties, both to individuals (ie increased use of Personal Budgets, the use of High Needs funds without an EHC plan, and creation of bespoke placements) and strategically (ie pooling budgets, fully joint commissioning and service level reviews) will impact upon both day to day financial management and longer term financial planning. This report recommends additional resource for the SEND Business Unit and Financial Team.
- d. Capacity and knowledge to deliver the SEND Improvement Programme - the area's capacity to deliver assessment, planning and change at the pace required - is limited. The authority has appointed a SEND Consultant to lead the SEND Improvement Programme and significant progress has been made against the recommendations of the LGA18, in addition to further assessment and preparation for planning. This report recommends that the authority identifies resource for this role to continue for at least an additional 12 months.
- e. Prevention, planning and graduated response support for schools - school-wide understanding and application of the graduated response and very broad provision of high needs funding without an EHC plan will continue to impact upon the quality of requests for assessment, provision and outcomes for children and young people with SEND and inclusion (among many other things) for some time to come. Returning to a position which sees Education Psychologists support schools to plan for the SEND cohort both on an individual and whole school basis will begin to ameliorate this. Training and coaching for and by the SEND and disability teams will ensure that changes are embed and suitably communicated to parents and carers.

- f. Support for young people who are SEND and NEET – resource has lately been made available for the creation of a Preparation for Adulthood Team which will ensure that children and young people are properly supported as they transition to adult services. This report recommends that additional resource is also made available to the existing NEET team, to ensure that those young people currently on an uncertain pathway, who are unknown or NEET and have SEND are properly supported into employment, education or training.
- g. Improving user experience and placing co-production at the centre of the area's SEND function - this area, which cuts across the majority of the duties highlighted at the beginning of this report cannot be addressed in isolation as it represents both the impact sought from the SEND Improvement Programme which is now beginning its action planning and seeks to secure the culture shift towards the person centred approach envisaged by the SEND Reforms. Nonetheless, many of the resources identified in this list will have impacts on this front. Additionally it is recommended that the area looks into e-portals (there are several available) which begin to automate the process of statutory assessment and review, making it more accessible to service users and reducing the degree of administrative work in these processes.
- h. Facilitating the use of Personal Budgets under section 49 CFA14 - in addition to the direct impact upon financial management noted above, in the short to medium term enhancing the promotion and uptake of Personal Budgets represents a significant draw on resources as professionals across the area come to terms with the provision and commission of services to meet the needs of individual children and young people. Monitoring the efficacy and outcomes of provision commissioned in this way will require additional resource within the SEND Assessment Team and SEND Business Unit.
- i. The Local Offer at section 40 (5) and (6) CFA14 - the local offer was previously maintained by a grant funded post which has now ended. This report recommends that resource is identified to ensure that keeping the local offer under review (and publishing comments and responses) falls within the portfolio of a role dedicated to communicating with and promoting both specialist and universal services inside and outside of the area.