

Schools Forum Document NC

REVIEW OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY (SLT) FUNDED THROUGH THE HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

1. SUMMARY

This document is to review the SLT provisions funded through the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant and propose changes to arrangements from September 2021.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The LA and CCG have a duty to consider how provision to meet the needs of Children and Young People with SEND, aged 0-25, will be jointly commissioned. This includes Speech and Language Therapy provision.
- 2.2. It has been agreed that a review will take place jointly between the local authority and the CCG to look at the current model for SLT and any potential improvements that can be made to joint commissioning arrangements. This should identify options for future commissioning to meet the needs of children and young people across Bradford, and should ideally take account of provision commissioned by schools and colleges and include schools and colleges in the review to identify appropriate future commissioning plans. There is no timescale yet identified for this review and for any options to be put in place. Given the complexities of the CCG funding and contract arrangements it is likely that a new model would take a number of years to implement.
- 2.3. Whilst this wider review is undertaken there is a more immediate need to consider the current arrangements that are funded through the High Needs Block.
- 2.4. There are currently 3 separate arrangements funded from the High Needs Block in place within the Department of Children's Services. The Providers are the Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust and the Airedale NHS Foundation Trust. These are:

- **Resourced Provisions (RP) delivered by both Bradford and Airedale NHS**

Delivery of an enhanced level of SLT support in RP schools reflecting the higher level needs of the pupils placed there by the Council. This is in addition to the Core offer funded by health, and should not replace that offer. SLT Reports contribute to a pupil's EHCP. Pupils in SCLN provisions require intensive and on-going specialist SLT intervention, therefore, regular sessions are allocated to these provisions. Sessions include environmental modification, staff training and support, bespoke groups and individual therapy. The SLTs are an integral part of the RP and wider school staff. The current SLAs include 7 half days for 7 Schools from Airedale and 22 half days for 16 Schools from Bradford, 12 of these half days are dedicated to the 3 x SLCN Schools. The history of these contracts have determined the provision that is commissioned.

- **Specialist provision for Hearing impaired children**

This Contract went out to competitive tender and provides SLT services to children within the Sensory Service. A highly specialist SLT provides services to children in the Additionally Resourced Centres (ARCs) based at three Schools in Bradford. They hold a caseload of approximately 80 children. A specialist SLT provides services to children supported by the Early Years Outreach team. They hold a caseload of approximately 160 children, involvement is a mixture of advisory, programme provision to be delivered by teachers of the deaf and 1-2-1 intervention.

- 2.5. In addition to the above Contracts, the CCG's fund a 'Core Contract' which is to provide evidence-based services that anticipate and respond to the needs of individuals who experience speech, language, communication or swallowing difficulties. Speech and language therapy works in partnership with these individuals and their families and with other professionals and agencies to reduce the impact of these often isolating difficulties on people's wellbeing and their ability to participate in daily life. Services are provided at various NHS settings and numerous non-NHS settings as well as home visits.
- 2.6. The 'Core Contract' covers both adults and children across Bradford and Craven and is delivered by Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust and Airedale NHS Foundation Trust.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1. There are immediate issues in terms of delivery with the 2 x RP Contracts. Bradford has expanded the number of Resourced Provision places in response to increasing demand. Bradford and Airedale NHS have been asked to include these in their offer, but with no additional funding for SLT. The Providers identify that this is resulting in already stretched resources being stretched even further, thereby not really offering an 'enhanced' service. The current service has been reconfigured to meet the increased number of places required, however this has been designed around the available budget, rather than based upon need. The arrangements in place in 2017/18 were for 4 RPs in Airedale and 11 RPs in Bradford. The contract for 20/21 covers 7 RPs in Airedale and 16 RPs in Bradford. A total increase from 15 to 23 RPs.
- 3.2. The contracts for Resourced Provisions and Hearing Impaired are contracts delivering training, advice, small group work and one to one specialist intervention for Speech, Language, Communication and Interaction needs and also for needs as a result of delayed and/or disrupted language and communication development due to Deafness and hearing impairment in order to support language development, communication and interaction. Also to provide specialist advice and reports to support the Annual Review process, individual target setting around speech production and expression.
- 3.3. The current contract for Hearing Impaired provision has been agreed with the provider to continue until September 2022. The earliest date that all Council contracted provision could be brought under a single arrangement is from September 2022, it is the intention of the Council to move to a single contract for provision in the RPs and ARCs from September 2022. This will be a tendered process to ensure that the best quality offer is available for children and young people in these provisions.

Ahead of this process it is suggested that changes to delivery are made with the next academic year in order to ensure provision is in place to respond to the increased number of RP places within the District.

4. BUDGETS

- **RP Airedale** (£38,995) & Bradford. (£134,890) Funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block.
- **Hearing Impaired Contract** (£71,873). Funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block.

5. CURRENT REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1. There is an immediate need to look at the contract values for Resourced Provisions. Recent review by service leads and the commissioning team identifies a need for increasing the level of resource to meet need in RP provision.
- 5.2. The current contracts were put in place for RPs with the following specialisms: ASC; SLCN and Learning Difficulties. The provisions not included in Contract are: Visual Impairment; SEMH; Physical Difficulties and SEND KS1. At present Airedale deliver 1 half day in each RP, all of the RPs in the Airedale contract are for ASC. At present Bradford deliver a set number of half days allocated for the year to the SLCN RPs. For ASC and LD provisions schools submit requests for a specific service and specific time is allocated by SLTs on a termly basis. This means there is a difference in the level of access to provision across the RPs.

	No on Roll	No of Places	No of Schools	No of half days
Airedale	67	88	7	7
Bradford	231	325	16	22
	298	413	23	29

The current number of sessions delivered is 29 per week for RPs with 413 places. The current contract values are:

	Contract Value
Airedale	£46,897.00
Bradford	£134,985.00
TOTAL	£181,882.00

- 5.3. **Required Provision.** It is proposed that provision is put in place to include service delivery in all Resourced Provisions for SLCN and ASC, based on 95% of the available places being full. This is based on the fact that children and young people in these provisions have significant speech, language and communication needs. It

would also include some provision in Resourced Provisions for SEMH, based on 15% of the places being for children and young people with a secondary need of SLCN. The number of children for sessions to be allocated to will be 95% of the number of places for SLCN and ASD provisions and 15% of the number of places for SEMH provision. It would not include delivery in Special Schools or Resourced Provisions for Visual Impairment; Physical Difficulties; Learning Difficulties and SEND KS1.

It is based on RPs getting an adequate no of half days (based on approx. a half day per week per 6 places). This formula is used to calculate the funding, it does not set the delivery requirements. It will be in agreement between the service provider, the local authority and the RPs that weekly sessions are allocated to RPs, in response to levels of need.

	No of Places (SLCN and ASD)	No of Places (SEMH)	No of Schools	Number of children (95% SLCN and ASC + 15% SEMH)	No of Sessions
Airedale	88	0	7	84	14
Bradford	174	70	18	176	28
	250	70	25	259	43

The number of sessions delivered would be 43 per week for RPs with 320 places.

	Contract Value
Airedale	£95,000
Bradford	£176,660
TOTAL	£271,660

The providers will be required to utilise resources in the most effective way to meet the individual needs of children and young people. This means that they will consider the needs in the Resourced Provision for the area they cover and will deliver support to RPs in a way that prioritises the children and young people with the highest level of need.

- 5.4. This sets the requirements for this academic year. There is an expectation that numbers will increase further so future years will require further review. If we build in an allowance for the expected 5% increase in places over the next 2 to 3 years to academic year 2022/2023 This would increase the budget by 5% to £285,243.

6. PROPOSAL

- 6.1. It is proposed that the existing contract model continues with the current Providers through the issue of new contracts for another year for the separate services but the level of resource for the RP contract increases.

- 6.2. The commitment of an additional £89,778 for the Resourced Provision contracts is requested for September 2021.**
- 6.3. There will be an additional requirement for additional approx. £13,583 by September 2023 if we take in to account the expected 5% growth.**
- 6.4. The joint commissioning review with CCG and Public Health commissioners will determine long-term arrangements, in the meantime the RP and Hearing Impaired contracts will be retendered for September 2022 to ensure value for money is delivered whilst the joint commissioning work is undertaken.**