

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE
23rd June 2020

REPORT AUTHOR: **County Councillor Phyl Davies**
Portfolio Holder for Education

REPORT TITLE: **The Future of Special Educational Needs/Additional Learning Needs provision in Powys – draft discussion paper**

REPORT FOR: **Decision**

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request approval to carry out an engagement exercise to develop a new vision and areas for transformation for Special Educational Needs (SEN)/ Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision in Powys.

1.2 The report is supported by the following appendix:

- **Appendix A** Draft discussion paper

2. Background

2.1 On the 14th April 2020, a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-30 was approved by the Leader. The Strategy includes the following four **Strategic Aims**:

Strategic Aim 1	We will improve learner entitlement and experience
Strategic Aim 2	We will improve learner entitlement and experience for post-16 learners
Strategic Aim 3	We will improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages
Strategic Aim 4	We will improve the provision for learners with SEN/ALN

2.2 As part of Workstream 4, officers have developed a draft discussion paper on the future of SEN/ALN provision in Powys. The paper outlines the following:

- Current Situation
- Vision and guiding principles
- Proposed areas for transformation

2.3 During the Strategic Review of Schools' engagement exercise carried out earlier this year, and as highlighted in the Estyn report published in September 2019, significant reforms are required in the provision and delivery of SEN/ALN provision in Powys. The **case for change**, as outlined in Appendix A, is that there is inequality in access to SEN/ALN provision:

- Depending on where pupils live, they have access to a different quality and type of provision
- Some pupils must travel long distances to reach a provision that meets their needs
- Access to provision through the medium of Welsh is inconsistent
- Currently, not all pupils are educated in the setting that meets their needs best
- There are pupils in special schools who could be taught in mainstream classes or specialist centres
- There are pupils in specialist centres who should be in mainstream classes
- There are pupils in the PRU who should be in mainstream schools
- Mainstream schools do not all have the facilities or expertise required to support pupils with a wide range of learning needs

2.4 The draft discussion document (Appendix A) outlines a **vision** for SEN/ALN in Powys as follows:

- All pupils across Powys will receive high quality provision that meets their needs, no matter where they live
- Most pupils with SEN/ALN will be taught in their local mainstream school
- All pupils with SEN/ALN will be placed in a provision that meets their needs, as near to home as is practicably possible, with the appropriate specialist teaching, support and facilities that enables every learner to meet their potential
- There will be a comprehensive range of specialist provision, including special schools, PRU, specialist centres, satellite centres and early assessment provision
- This will include both English and Welsh medium provision
- Special schools will cater for those pupils who have the most complex needs, for example severe learning difficulties (SLD), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and complex ASD
- Schools within and across geographical areas will support each other and share effective practice

2.5 The discussion document also identifies **six areas where transformation** is required:

'In order to achieve this vision, wholescale transformation is going to be required. This will involve the refiguration of current provision and development of new provision as well as supporting mainstream schools to be able to meet the learners of a wider range of pupils with SEN/ALN.'

Alongside the proposed transformation described in this document, there will be a restructure of central services. This will enable the local authority (LA) to provide the support for schools that will be required to take this transformation forward. Information about the restructure will be provided in a separate paper at the appropriate time, in line with advice from HR.

Six areas of transformation have been identified:

- *Mainstream*
- *Early support/assessment*
- *Specialist provision for pupils of statutory school age with the most complex needs*
- *Specialist centres'*
- *Specialist behaviour provision*
- *Provision for SEN/ALN learners up to the age of 25'*

3. Advice

3.1 It is advised that Cabinet approves further engagement on the draft paper for discussion – The Future of SEN/ALN Provision in Powys, to ensure that stakeholders can inform the development of the vision and areas for transformation.

4. Resource Implications

4.1 There are no resource implications from carrying out an engagement exercise, as this will be done online and using digital platforms.

4.2 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) can support the recommendation.

5. Legal implications

5.1 Legal : The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view.

5.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report."

6. Comment from local member(s)

6.1 Not applicable.

7. Integrated Impact Assessment

7.1 An integrated impact assessment will be presented to Cabinet along with the final vision and areas for transformation following the engagement exercise.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet approves further engagement with stakeholders on the draft discussion paper – ‘The future of SEN/ALN provision in Powys’ and submission of a final vision and areas for transformation to Cabinet by no later than October 2020.

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