

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 25 JANUARY 2011

THE FUTURE FUNDING OF THE OUTREACH SERVICE FROM GILBROOK SCHOOL.

Background

At the meeting of the Schools Forum held on 29th September 2010 members will recall that a report concerning the future funding of the behaviour support service from Gilbrook School was considered.

1. The report summarised the findings of a working party which had investigated the options regarding the future funding of the outreach service from Gilbrook. For 2010-11 the Forum had agreed to find £79,000 from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve to ensure that the service continued. The Working Group recommended in future that the full costs of the current service, £150,000 be funded from DSG.
2. At its meeting on the 29th September 2010 the Forum unanimously recommended the following proposals :
 - (i) That £150,000 from DSG should be used to fund the outreach service from April 2011.
 - (ii) That the £56,000 currently set aside from the contingency for permanently excluded pupils when they move to new schools should also be deployed to support schools in preventing exclusions.
3. Following consultation in the autumn term 2010 on the recommendations of the Forum responses have been reviewed from 27 primary schools and one secondary school. All supported the recommendations with one exception.
4. In view of the “flat cash” settlement reported elsewhere on this agenda it is proposed to fund the costs of the proposal from reduced demand on centrally held SEN budgets.
5. The proposed changes will have implications for the organisation of the service not least in terms of moving from a service only provided to those schools which have a service level agreement to one which is authority wide. In order to assist with a possible increase in demand officers are discussing with a member of staff currently employed centrally, and with significant experience of behaviour support, as to whether they may transfer to the team based at Gilbrook on a full time basis. Any costs which would result from such a redeployment could be met by resources currently available centrally for behaviour support. Discussions are at an early stage and whatever the outcome it is certain the staff currently employed in the team will continue to provide an excellent service.

Recommendation

In view of the outcome of the consultation the recommendations of the Schools Forum at its meeting on the 29th September 2010 are confirmed.

David Armstrong
Interim Director of Children's Services