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| <b>Committee:</b>                                    | School Forum                      |
| <b>Meeting Date:</b>                                 | 14 January 2016                   |
| <b>Title:</b>  | High Needs Block Update           |
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| <b>Decision making / consultative / information:</b> | Information                       |

### **What is the Forum being asked to decide?**

1. The Forum is being asked to note the developments and progress being made within the High Needs Block (HNB).

### **Reason for recommendation**

2. It was requested by Forum that updates on the HNB were to be provided to the Forum as a standing item due to the current pressures in this area

### **Alternative options**

3. This is an information paper after on-going discussions at recent Forum meetings, as such no alternative options are offered.

### **Who will be affected by this decision?**

4. The HNB funding impacts on all Local Authority (LA) Maintained Schools, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) Special Schools, Academies, other specialist provision, Out of County Placements and Central Special Educational Needs services.

### **Main Body of the Report**

#### **Update**

5. Work continues around the development of specialist provision in Suffolk. There will be further reviews and pieces of work in 2016 focussing on:
  - Specialist Support Centres
  - Residential Provision in Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD) Special Schools
  - Special Schools
  - Post 16 Specialist provision
  - Alternative Provision

6. Further details and an update of progress will be available at the next Schools Forum meeting. In the interim, papers will be taken and presented to cabinet members (to keep members informed) and there will be appropriate communication with schools and specialist provision when and where appropriate over the coming months.
7. The focus around this development work is to ensure there is geographical consistency across the county so that a wide range of provision is available wherever a child or young person lives in Suffolk. This is a priority for the Council and its partners to close the gap between the achievement of pupils with SEN and their peers without SEN.
8. Out of County spend is reducing. There has been some budget realignment for some areas that have historically been paid from Out of County, when in fact should have been paid from other areas or through different teams. The work around creating additional capacity in county and in the right areas also reduces the need to send learners out of county.
9. Education Other than at School (EOTAS) has had some additional pressure recently which is having an adverse impact on the service area. This is being carefully managed in order to mitigate any increased spend going forward for the remainder of the year.
10. As previously discussed the recovery plan is already underway, looking at increasing the 'Local Offer', develop locality ownership for all learners and robust quality assurance arrangements to improve outcomes for vulnerable learners and deliver best value.
11. Through the investment in to the HNB, the initiatives, projects already completed and recovery planning, the over spend has been consolidated in this financial year.
12. At the end of Quarter 2 the over spend on the HNB was forecast to be approximately £2.5m. This was a reduction of £0.7m on the 2014-15 final outturn position. The Quarter 3 position when finalised is expecting to see a further reduction on this overspend which will hopefully materialise for the final 2015-16 position.