*Dear FACT Bucks*

*Please find attached the finalised version of the work that took place in November 2019 conducted by Impower.  We apologise for the delay in sharing this information with you, but as with all things, we have experienced some delays as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic we find ourselves in.  We commissioned this work to help us better understand the levels of future demand and cost for SEND services and to support with the identification of alternative ways to support children and young people with SEND that will help them achieve the best outcomes.*

*We found this exercise to be incredibly useful and are ensuring that the information collated within this working with families and settings has been incorporated into our Self-Evaluation Framework of the Local Area and will be one of the key pieces of evidence that we use as we develop  our SEN Strategy together.  We will also be incorporating the specific recommendations for the iSEND Service into our service action plan, which we are developing over the coming term.  As the work was carried out in November of last year, we have already made some significant progress towards the recommendations outlined.  Some specific examples of progress are detailed below and I have attached the most recent presentation that we have put together to highlight our progress with SEND Improvement as well, for your information.*

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| *1.*     *Strengthen the Local Offer Website* | ·       *A new Buckinghamshire Family Information Service directory and website has been commissioned and is being developed by FutureGov, which will include the published Local Offer. This will allow greater flexibility to co-produce the content and structure the information to make things easier to find.*  ·       *The Local Offer Advisory & Impact Group have been invited to take part in user research activities, and in-depth user research interviews have taken place with parent carer reps and some young people with SEND to influence the development. The original plans had to be amended due to Covid 19 and so these have taken place virtually.*  ·       *The new system will make use of digital best practice, designed to be accessible and will build on the co-production and feedback already gathered over the years.*  ·       *Out of date content is being reviewed by key contributors within the various services to ensure it reflects the many changes and improvements. The FIS Digital team will try to introduce a new approach to writing and accepting content and publishing information to ensure it meets the digital accessibility standards*  ·       *The current situation in relation to COVID 19 has meant that much information has needed to be uploaded to enable families to access specialist support and guidance from home.  We have received a number of compliments that this page is useful and informative.* |
| *2.*     *Continue to drive earlier identification and support* | ·       *Development of the Educational Psychology offer, with a greater focus on early identification is underway with a new Principal Educational Psychologist and Senior Educational Psychologists recruited from January 2020.  PEP is chairing the SEND Support Local Area Impact Group to really drive this work forward.*  ·       *Collaborative to develop clear procedure with health around early years identification of those with the most complex needs.*  ·       *Hub network model to be trialled in Chiltern and South Bucks over the coming term for SENCos – opportunity to share good practice and to deliver training in smaller groups enabling greater discussion.*  ·       *Launch of Ordinarily Available Provison - promoting a consistent ethos to supporting children receiving SEND Support. This approach has been created by schools, professionals and parents and is a fantastic user-friendly, accessible resource for all.  It outlines the special educational needs that children may have across the four broad areas, with easy to use provision suggestions for all members of school staff and families alike, as well as strategies for whole school and quality first teaching, enabling earlier identification and support of need.* |
| *3.*     *Embrace a strengths based approach to conversations* | ·       *Increased EHC Coordinator capacity – reducing caseloads by over 40% - in post and inducted from April 2020.  Greater focus on strength-based communications with settings and families.* |
| *4.*     *Build capacity to tailor support to needs* | ·       *Engagement work with the special school community over the course of this academic year in order to develop a clear continuum of special school provision in Buckinghamshire, being clear of the needs of the children that should attend there.* |
| *5.*     *Optimise decision-making* | ·       *Introduction of the new single SEND Placement Panel; next step is working collaboratively with SENDIAS and settings to develop training around the placements of children and young people to be delivered over the coming term to improve this shared understanding, enabling accurate decision making.* |
| *6.*     *Develop and embed capabilities to drive inclusion* | ·       *Outcomes Impact Group formed – multi-agency and with the chair of the parent / carer forum chairing these meetings.  One of the key focuses is to ensure that outcomes for children and young people is at the centre of all strategic and operational thinking, and the EHCP template is being reviewed to enable this.* |

*As the strategy and service plans are created over the coming weeks, we will of course share these with you so that you can see how these key recommendations continue to be threaded through.  It has also been useful to look at some of the other work completed within other local authorities with Impower, that they have included in the attached report, as these may inspire as further as we move forward with our Improvement Journey.  Thank you to all who contributed to this work – which seems like a lifetime ago – improvements are already visible.*

*Best wishes,*

**Hero Slinn**

**Head of Integrated SEND Service**