

Somerset Parent Carer Forum

Weekly update



We hope everyone has a pleasant summer holidays and the return to school or work went smoothly. At the forum we returned to news of Somerset County Council planning to make substantial cuts to services to ensure they balance the books this year. This has meant we have placed our plans for the start of term on hold while we work on this area.

PROPOSAL FOR CUTS TO SPENDING

Somerset County Council announced over 70 proposals, in nearly 700 pages of documents, to reduce spending by approximately 13 million this year. Areas which would be affected under the proposals include - Citizens Advice funding, Young carers, get set staff, SEND transport, Funding for Discovery (adults learning Disability services), unpaid leave for council staff, SEND placements, youth Services, moving money from the schools designated grant to pay for Occupational therapy assessments and a higher contribution to residential placements, Salting and gritting, Flood prevention and changes to transport.

The proposals were discussed at the scrutiny meeting on the 11th September and cabinet on the 12th September. The forum attended both meetings and submitted questions that challenging the processes that were used and the lack of time the public had to review and respond to the proposals. All questions were based on the principles in the Children and Families Act and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

INCLUSION AUDIT FOR SCHOOLS

Somerset Parent Carer Forum representatives attended the meeting for support services for Education to look at the new inclusion audit all schools in Somerset will be asked to complete.

The audit covers a variety of areas and includes a review of the whole school approach to inclusion. More details will be in the SEND area newsletter issue due the week of 19th September.

AUTISM STRATEGY

This week we attended the meeting to discuss the refresh of the strategy.

Representatives attended from Somerset County Council adult and Childrens services, Somerset Clinical commissioning group inc the Designated medical Officer and Designated Clinical officer and Autism Somerset. Work is now underway to refresh the strategy.



Physical Impairment and medical support team, Hearing and vision impairment events.

This week was the start of the 5 events to discuss options of what the service could look like moving forward. Following all 5 events the feedback will be reviewed by a working group which includes representatives of the forum, education, the 3 services, health, the national deaf society and parents who use the service.

Improving social care outcome measures



On Tuesday we ran a workshop with the Anna Freud Centre to look at parental and young peoples experiences of social care. If you were unable to attend but would like to be involved please contact us and we will send you out a survey.

