

**Joint Meeting of School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group  
8 January 2018, 1:30pm  
Cullum Room, County Hall**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Liz Williams, Susan Tanner, Neil Baker, Catriona Williamson, John Hawkins, Phil Cook

**Apologies:** Grant Davis, Lisa Percy, Tracey Cornelius, Debbie Bennett

1	<p><b><i>Minutes of Previous Meeting</i></b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting (20 November 2017) were reviewed. The minutes had been considered at the December schools forum meeting.</p> <p>EW noted that further analysis of the Behaviour Support Service budget would be brought to the March meeting</p>	EW
2a	<p><b><i>DSG Funding Settlement 2018-19</i></b></p> <p>EW presented a paper outlining the overall funding settlement for 2018-19. The provisional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation for Wiltshire Council is <b>£342.498m</b>. The report outlined the calculation basis for each funding block and the decision making process for the 2018-19 budget.</p> <p>The group discussed the methodology for high needs recoupment now that place funding for resourced provision would be funded at £6,000 rather than £10,000. EW to include a proposal in the High Needs Block report.</p>	EW
2b	<p><b><i>Schools Block 2018-19</i></b></p> <p>EW presented a brief report highlighting the schools block allocation for 2018-19 and progress on the calculation of individual school budgets for 2018-19.</p> <p>It was noted that the agreement at Cabinet, and recommendation from Schools Forum, was to move as close as possible to the NFF rather than replicate directly. NB requested that this be reflected in the report.</p> <p>EW noted that there is a shortfall between the funding received and the affordability of the NFF if all of the funding factors are applied at the original values proposed in the DfE policy document. Reasons for this included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increases in business rates for a number of schools (funded at historical values in the NFF)</li> <li>2. A number of growing schools being funded on estimated numbers</li> </ol>	EW

	<p>It was agreed that any reduction should be applied to the funding rate for FSM Ever6 in the first instance. The rationale for this decision was that Schools Forum has consistently identified the potential for double funding between the FSM Ever6 factor in the NFF and the allocation of Pupil Premium Grant – this was highlighted in the Wiltshire response to the consultation. It was therefore considered that a reduction in this factor would have the least impact on the funding received by individual schools. It was agreed that this should be included in the modelling work but that Schools Forum would be required to agree as part of the budget setting decision making process.</p> <p>It was requested that detail of the amount of funding to be allocated through each funding factor be brought to the schools forum meeting. EW noted that as budgets are still being calculated this table may not be available to circulate in advance but would be available at the meeting on 18 January.</p> <p>The group also requested that the previous decisions in relation to de-delegation of budgets be included in the report to ensure schools forum had all information available at the meeting.</p>	<p>EW/GD</p> <p>EW/GD</p> <p>EW</p>
2c	<p><b>Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) 2018-19</b></p> <p>EW presented a paper outlining the CSSB allocation for 2018-19 and the services covered. The appendix to the report detailed the responsibilities that the LA has for all schools and for maintained schools only.</p> <p>NB asked whether the CSSB allocation would be reduced in 2019-20 if historical commitments were not funded. This was with particular reference to the commitment for Prudential Borrowing which would cease at the end of 2018-19. EW to investigate whether baselines were set for 2 years or would change.</p>	<p>EW</p>
2d	<p><b>High Needs Block 2018-19</b></p> <p>EW presented a report outlining the funding settlement for the high needs block in 2018-19 and the estimated pressures for the financial year. Whilst work was ongoing to finalise the pressures for 2018-19 it was estimated that the gap between demand and the available funding would be £1.5m-£2m assuming similar activity levels to the current year.</p> <p>The group discussed the potential impact of any proposal to reduce top up values and/or transferring funding from schools block to the high needs block. The view of the group was that these would be high risk actions because of the impact on the ability of mainstream schools to support pupils with SEN with reduced funding levels.</p> <p>It was agreed that the ongoing work to prioritise the development of in county special school places was an essential part of the solution to pressures on the high needs block in future years.</p>	

	<p>A number of options were considered in order to reduce the shortfall on the high needs block, all of which would need to be considered as part of the wider budget decision making process. It was noted that any deficit on the high needs block would need to be a call on the grant in future years and that in order for this to be sustainable, longer term actions needed to have an impact on spend.</p> <p>Shorter term options identified included reviewing whether it would be possible to continue with the developments funded in 2017-18.</p>	
2e	<p><b>Early Years Block 2018-19</b></p> <p>EW presented a report on the early years block for 2018-19. It was noted that the paper had been considered by the Early Years Reference Group on 5 January 2018 and that the group had supported the possible increase of £0.02 per hour.</p>	
2f	<p><b>Decision Matrix</b></p> <p>The group identified the following additional decisions that would need to be included in the decision paper:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Level of place funding to be considered when considering the SEN recoupment mechanism for resourced provision places</li> <li>2. Decision on which formula factors should be reduced in order to ensure the schools delegated budget is affordable within the allocated schools block</li> <li>3. List of previous decisions on de-delegation for completeness</li> <li>4. Decision on whether funding for SEN developments agreed in 2017-18 should be rolled forward and the projects continued.</li> </ol>	EW
3	<p><b>Update on SEN Developments funded in 2017-18</b></p> <p>ST presented a paper outlining progress to date on the following projects/initiatives funded in 2017-18 from funding transferred from schools block to high needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEMH Centres of Excellence</li> <li>• Transitions in to Primary and Secondary schools</li> <li>• Funding for equipment for children &amp; young people with hearing impairments</li> <li>• Funding to support developments in Alternative Provision</li> </ul> <p>It was reported that one SEMH centre had so far been established and that £0.240m of the allocated funding had been utilised for that project.</p> <p>It was identified that the funding for AP and for equipment were</p>	

	<p>one off allocations and therefore could be reduced/removed in 2018-19.</p> <p>It was asked whether it could be demonstrated that the transitions funding had prevented additional Education Health &amp; Care Plans (EHCPs).</p>	
4	<p><b><i>Any Other Business</i></b></p> <p>EW highlighted a current government consultation:</p> <p><a href="#">consultation on eligibility for FSM and the EYPPG under Universal Credit</a></p> <p>This consultation included proposals for how the eligibility for free school meals and Early Years Pupil Premium Grant would be calculated under Universal Credit. It was noted that the proposed income threshold would come in to place from April 2018.</p>	
5	<p><b><i>Date of Next Meeting</i></b></p> <p>Next joint meeting of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group will take place on Wednesday 7 March 2018, 8:30am at County Hall, Trowbridge.</p>	