

## Joint meeting of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group

4 June 2019

### Minutes

**Present:** Marie Taylor (Chair), Grant Davis, Judith Westcott, Neil Baker, Lisa Percy (via skype) John Hawkins, Phil Cook, Helean Hughes

**Apologies:** Catriona Williamson, Nick Breakwell, Sam Churchill

1	<p><b>Minutes from previous meeting</b> The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed.</p>	
2	<p><b>Matters Arising</b> There were no matters arising.</p>	
3	<p><b>F40 group work</b> GD shared his report highlighting the recent work of the F40 group on behalf of local authorities. NB suggested links with recent DfE guidance on running small rural schools efficiently <a href="#">DfE Research - Running small rural schools efficiently</a></p> <p>HH updated the group on the Small Schools Project who met for the first time before half term. The aim is to help small schools and their governing bodies explore opportunities to manage differently with limited resources and to encourage them to look for opportunities for sustainable models moving forward. Further meetings are planned The group supported the report.</p>	
4	<p><b>SEND &amp; AP Call for Evidence</b> GD shared his report regarding the DfE's consultation which closes on 31 July 2019 – 11.45am <a href="#">Call for Evidence</a></p> <p>NB was keen to share the message that schools block cannot top up high needs block indefinitely. MT said officers were meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> June to formulate a local authority response NB suggested an answer sheet for schools to encourage responses – it was agreed that the local authority response would be sent to LP and NB who would then meet outside the group and finalise a “model response” version to be sent out to schools by the end of June PC to flag up with Special Heads Attempts would be made to add to the PHF agenda on 4<sup>th</sup> July LP to share with WASSH Heads Copy to be sent to JH to share with WGA. HH and GD to be invited to the WGA meeting on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July at the Corn Exchange, Devizes GD to update schools via Right Choice that a “model answer” would be sent early July for them to submit by the deadline.</p>	<p>MT LP/NB</p> <p>PC NB LP</p> <p>HH/GD GD</p>

5	<p><b>SEN Place Planning</b></p> <p>JW gave a verbal update on progress from the various capital schemes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Free School in the South</u> – site identified, next to Pembroke Park. ASD/SEMH school for 150 pupils, likely timescale Sept 2022, the DfE ideal timescale Sept 2021. Wiltshire have to pay for “abnormals” which will be funded from the SEND grant above. Potential sponsors need to submit by September 30<sup>th</sup> 2019. The Local authority will suggest preferred sponsors to the DfE who lead on Free School builds.</li> <li>2. <u>Special Schools Consultation in the North</u> – cabinet met on the 22/5/19, the decisions made were; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed a maintained school. The Secretary of State (SoS) needs to approve and this could take up to 6 weeks. If the full 6 weeks is taken, the consultation will start in September 2019. If this is 3 weeks (as hoped) the consultation can take place in July 2019.</li> <li>• 1 single leadership team moving forward to enable existing heads and leadership teams to be directly involved and have a pivotal role in shaping the new model</li> <li>• The Council are committed to a one school approach however, this does not mean a one building approach</li> <li>• Decisions on buildings will be made later in the process a consultation in 2022 to “close buildings” at this point we will consider demand and future demand – for example the HIF bid in Chippenham will increase housing significantly and so flexibility is required moving forward.</li> </ul> <p>JW confirmed demand will still outstrip supply on Sept 2020  HH said ISOS feedback will be key and encouraged all professional to attend the ISOS meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> June at the Civic Hall and complete the on-line survey  The group went on to have an interesting discussion around pupils needs, phasing and timing of approach, placements, inclusion and the importance of a good EHCP which may not necessarily require funding. HH said the solution is inclusion and the strategy moving forward needs to be whole system with everyone buying in.</p> </li> <li>3. <u>Planned use of SEND Grant monies £1.4m</u>  The consultation closed on 31/5 and schools who put in successful bids will be officially notified this week. The criteria for this grant funding was that new places had to be created in resource bases or, special schools in good or outstanding schools or provision could be improved in other schools  JW confirmed funding is dependent on fitting the DfE grant criteria and this is separate from the Harbour Project which, is a pre EHCP offer.</li> </ol>	
6	<p><b>Exeter House Split Site Allowance</b></p> <p>GD shared his report. The local authority has asked Exeter House to expand provision and places to 134 for September 2019 with pupil numbers likely to be at 140. The school have requested additional</p>	

	<p>funding to operate over their two existing sites in order the meet the local authority's need.</p> <p>GD confirmed this will be additional pressure on the high needs block but will avoid more costly out of county placements.</p> <p>The group debated the need for expansion and agreed that the policy needs to be consistently applied across any special schools with split sites with a review of costs against income.</p> <p>LP / NB – no choice but to recommend and this adds to the DfE's call for evidence for pressure on the HNB.</p>	
7	<p><b>Verbal Update – ISOS Review on HNB</b></p> <p>HH explained the progress since March around the consultancy and explained that ISOS would be attending Schools Forum to update on progress in October 2019 when their research and report are complete. The work is currently in phase 2 of 3. ISOS have come up with theories but now need to test these out with all stakeholders.</p> <p>Questionnaire responses from schools has been good, but fewer from parents and carers than hoped. NB/LP to share workshop dates with PHF and WASSH colleagues</p> <p>The group were pleased to hear progress to date.</p>	NB/LP
8	<p><b>Budget Monitoring Report – Final Outturn 2018/19</b></p> <p>MT presented the report and appendices.</p> <p>The projected overspend has increased slightly since the last report shared with the group however, the overall overspend at £4.183 million remains significant.</p> <p>The number of EHCPS as at the end of March 2019 was 3,449 which is a 25% increase since the time of setting the budget.</p> <p>NB requested sight of the activity data – MT confirmed this was a regular internal management report and could be added as Appendix 2 for schools forum.</p> <p>The DSG deficit reserve is projected to be £2.073m to the end of the financial year – this is 0.6% of the total gross DSG allocation.</p> <p>The group had a in depth discussion around the presenting issues and the impact of the additional spend on the 19/20 and future recovery planning.</p> <p>The work of the high needs working group and ISOS work is key and an action plan and recovery plan are urgently required.</p>	MT
9	<p><b>Appeals Charging</b></p> <p>GD presented his report which will ensure the local authority is adhering to DfE guidance on charging all schools for appeals which will be introduced in April 2020.</p> <p>LP confirmed the costs were in the region of £300 per appeal and GD committed to speaking to Debbie Clare and adding to the report to be published for Schools Forum.</p> <p>NB raised the issue of a clash with ICS legislation and requested clarity re: charges for the “paper trail” appeal where a child with SEN would take</p>	GD

	class sizes over the legal limit but the appeal would be overturned where the child has an EHCP. GD to find out.	GD
8	<b><i>Date and Time of Next Meeting</i></b> Next meeting agreed on Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2019 – 8.30am Mompesson, County Hall, Trowbridge - Marie to book meeting	MT