

**Schools Forum**  
**School Funding and SEN Working Group**  
**MS TEAMS MEETING**

**11<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Marie Taylor (Chair), (Finance, local authority (LA)), Grant Davis (Finance, LA), Neil Baker (Christchurch), John Hawkins (Teacher / Governor rep), Catriona Williamson (Mere), Andy Bridewell (Ludgershall Castle), Lisa Percy (Hardenhuish), Helean Hughes (Director LA) Cate Mullen (Head of Inclusion & SEND, LA), Rebecca Carson (Woodford Valley) Gary Binstead (Children’s’ Commissioning LA)

**Apologies:** Sam Churchill (Hilmarton)

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| 1. | <p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b><br/> Apologies were received from SC above.<br/> Outstanding action – to seek Special School representation on the group from a current SF member.</p>  | MT |
| 2. | <p><b>Minutes from previous meeting</b><br/> The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.</p>   |    |
| 3. | <p><b>Matters Arising</b><br/> There were no matters arising.</p>   |    |
| 4. | <p><b>Budget Monitoring for the period to 31st December 2020 (MT)</b></p> <p>MT shared her report with the group. The forecast overspend for 20/21 is £9.123m which is a small movement from the last report.</p> <p>Highlights:<br/> Early Years - No variance is forecast on 2, 3 &amp; 4-year-old grant at this time due to uncertainty around January payments and census data. The local authority intends to distribute maximum funding without pushing an overspend position when the prior year adjustment is done by the DfE in July.</p> <p>School Budgets – the underspend is largely driven by the growth fund and this offsets the DSG overspend position.</p> <p>The HNB forecast overspend is £11.556m – again, based on higher numbers of EHCPS and levels of support requested. This forecast includes an estimate of future growth based on historical trend. The pressures on the HNB continue and the HNB working group will be prioritising demand management, savings projects, commissioning and spend controls.</p> <p>Of major concern remains the impact of this on the DSG deficit reserve balance which is held in the local authority’s balance sheet. The reserve balance is now forecast to be £19.933m.</p> |    |

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|   | This overspend will continue to be cash flowed by the local authority as per the DfE guidance.  |    |
| 5 | <p><b>CSSB Update Report 21-22 (MT)</b></p> <p>The CSSB was agreed in principle at the December SF meeting subject to any changes. There is one change, the DfE have notified the copyright licences are £0.395M which means the amount available to transfer to the HNB is reduced slightly to £0.192M.</p> <p>NB asked if comms could go to all schools around Copyright licenses (what was and wasn't included) – this will be added to the RC and newsletter</p> <p>Section A – SF consult only</p> <p>Sections B&amp;C – SF sign off required on a line by line basis</p>  | MT |
| 6 | <p><b>HNB Update Report 21-22 (MT)</b></p> <p>The HNB report was agreed in principle at the December SF meeting subject to any changes. There is one change, the revised estimate of planned places for specialist provision and confirmation that the special school places will include an amount for the teachers' pay and pension grant £660 per place.</p> <p>MT shared the draft DSG management plan on screen, pointing out the pertinent points. It was unfortunate that the late changes communicated last week around home schooling meant the HNB recovery group needed to be cancelled however, the DfE return is simply a combination of data, finances, our SEN &amp; Inclusion Strategy and existing recovery plans. MT welcomed feedback received from the group and this will be added;</p> <p>NB – include Ofsted positive commentary around Parent / Carer feedback &amp; note actions raised from Ofsted may not be affordable</p> <p>NB – note, notional SEN; funding mechanism does not necessarily align with CYP with SEND.</p> <p>MT - Add that SEN is not aligned to School Effectiveness (row 18) Training (row 22)</p> <p>RC – note that Wiltshire is a rural county which means many C&amp;YP in remote communities cannot access services</p> <p>NB – business model changed around provision of EPS – subsidised membership scheme and income target removed with FACT pilot scheme.</p> | MT |
|   | The agenda was re-ordered to facilitate LP who had to teach live at 10.30.  |    |
| 7 | <p><b>School Funding Settlement 21-22</b></p> <p>GD took the group through the report, highlighting areas of major change / interest. Time of investment as per the national 3 year "Boris Billions"; 21-22 remains a "soft year" for SF to make decisions around formula; national increase of 3% being Year 2 of the Government's additional funding pledge.</p> <p>Possible hard formula 24-25 FY and transition towards this.</p> <p>NB asked a question around the PPG census data change from the January census to the October census, with particular respect to LAC and post-LAC pupils. The change in the date for the census could result in the</p>   |    |

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|   | <p>funding for some pupils being treated as LAC rather than post-LAC with funding sitting with the Virtual head rather than the school.</p> <p>Total quantum of DSG of £406M, an increase of £31m but includes Teachers Pay and Pension ex-grant funding of £15M so a real increase of £16M</p> <p>De-delegation of centrally provided services for maintained schools was confirmed at the December 2020 meeting</p> <p>GD to submit school budgets to the DfE by 21-01-2021 following Schools Forum.</p>   |  |
| 8 | <p><b>Schools Block Delegated Report 21-22</b></p> <p>GD took the group through his report. The funding increase is a really positive one for Wiltshire. To allocate the new funding, the funding floor has been lifted and we were on the bottom of the funding floor which is why we have benefitted. This means that the NFF can be fully funded across all DfE factors at DfE proposed rates should SF wish to implement them.</p> <p>Decisions will need to be made around;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increasing Sparsity to the new DfE rates £26k to £45k for primary schools and £67.5k to £70k for secondary schools. Sparsity is an optional factor. SF had previously agreed the lower rate but felt the significant increase simply increases the inequity of the formula factor where two 'like' schools are funded differently.<br/>DfE Small &amp; rural schools consultation / review pending – date unclear but expected Spring 2021<br/>NB - nothing changed so existing decisions still stand<br/>LP - careful to reduce / remove – minded to retain current values<br/>MT - suggested passing on the 3% funding increase in line with other formula factors to £26,780 and £69,525.</li> <li>2. Transferring 0.5% of SB (net of TP&amp;P funding) to support HNB pupils – this had been agreed in principle at the December meeting, assuming the NFF was fully affordable</li> <li>3. Applying Mobility Factors – previously, SF had felt mobility had been double funding for service schools. GD has updated the model, based upon the latest census data and with the Army rebasing being complete. Now, the majority of schools who benefit are not service schools, the levels of 'real' mobility have stabilised, and the additional MOD funding is no longer available so it may be appropriate to take a different view as the circumstances have changed.<br/>NB – in principle decision now supported and funding 'real' mobility to support schools where the 'lagged' pupil funding from pupils joining schools after the October census is appropriate.<br/>GD – far better fit now army funding removed and stable levels of mobility<br/>LP – agree, could really make a difference to these schools<br/>GD – update wording on report to reflect</li> </ol> |  |

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| 9  | <p><b>Early Years Update Report 21-22 (MT)</b></p> <p>The EY provisional 21-22 allocations are now available and the proposed model is to fully passport the 8p to 2-year olds and 5p of the 6p to 3&amp;4-year olds. To be discussed at the EYRG meeting tomorrow.</p>   |  |
| 10 | <p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>MT raised a press report following the last SF meeting where the reporter had slightly misunderstood the reports on the different financial years. Although this was not a negative report, to facilitate more accurate reporting, MT would send press release to Sue Ellison in the Comms team to share with the democratic reporter.</p> |  |
| 11 | <p><b><i>Date and Time of Next Meeting</i></b></p> <p>Next meeting – date provisionally set at: Monday 1st March 2021 @ 8.30am<br/>This is planned as a virtual teams meeting.</p> <p>Next Schools Forum meeting Thursday 21 January 2021 @ 1.30pm. This is planned as a virtual teams meeting.</p>   |  |