

HIGH NEEDS BUDGETS 2015-16

Purpose of the Paper

1. To report on the proposals for the High Needs budgets for 2015-16 and recording of progress against the budget.

Main Considerations

Cost Pressures 2015-16

2. The provisional allocation of high needs funding for Wiltshire was announced for 2015-16 as £37.665 million. This included £420,000 being Wiltshire's share of the national £47m of additional top-up funding.
3. A report was presented to the March 2015 Schools Forum meeting which demonstrated that the inherent cost pressures facing the High Needs block in 2015-16 were £1.449m. Additional pressures were identified which resulted in the total cost pressures facing the High Needs block of approximately £1.9m. By allocating the additional £0.420m awarded to Wiltshire for 2015-16 against this projection, will help to reduce the cost pressures down to approximately £1.5m.
4. 'A Special Educational Needs Strategy for Wiltshire 2015-18 Consultation Document' has been produced which sets out proposals for SEN for the ensuing three years, along with savings proposals agreed with Schools Forum.

RAG Rating of Savings

5. A number of High Needs saving proposals were agreed with Schools Forum and these are detailed in Appendix 1. This table will be completed and updated during the course of the year to demonstrate the savings being achieved for each of the measures identified. The performance against each measure will be reported to future meetings of Schools Forum.

ELP & Resource Base Recycling of Places

6. The recycling of unfilled ELP and Resource Base 'place' funding is potentially the most contentious of the measures. Whilst the principle has been agreed at WASSH and Schools Forum the recycling is set to start from the payment of the July top up payments.
7. The proposal is for schools to be awarded additional place funding where they exceed their agreed number of places and would have funds recouped where their number of pupils falls below the agreed place numbers. A monthly proportion of the annual place funding of will be awarded or recouped accordingly.
8. There are occasions where a pupil may move between mainstream education and an ELP place or Resource Base, which pushes the school above its agreed number of places. In

this instance, the school would receive AWPU funding for the pupil being in mainstream, plus proportionate monthly place funding. However, where a pupil were to move from an ELP place or Resource Base into mainstream, then the school would not receive AWPU funding and also lose the place funding. Therefore there is a perceived inequity.

9. Schools Funding Working Group gave consideration to the impact of this funding and determined that such occurrences were indeed very rare and that this should not form part of the consideration regarding place funding. Agreement was confirmed that all additional place funding should be awarded at £10,000 per place, paid on a monthly basis and also that place funding of £10,000 per place should be recouped for unfilled places, on a monthly basis. Reports detailing the amounts to be recouped and additional place funding awarded are to be presented to future meetings of Schools Funding Working group and Schools Forum.

2015-16 Budget Monitoring

10. In addition to monitoring of the savings relating to the measures agreed at the March Schools Forum, the 2015-16 annual budget will also need to be monitored closely and any cost pressures reported to the ensuing Schools Forum meetings.

Proposal

11. Schools Forum is asked to note the content of the report.
12. Schools Forum is asked to confirm that the RAG monitoring of the savings proposals be adopted for identifying the impact of the savings measures for 2015-16.
13. Schools Forum is asked to agree that the first tranche of ELP and Resource Base recoupment should commence from the July top up payments.
14. Schools Forum is asked to confirm that additional place funding should be awarded and unfilled place funding be recouped at the annual rate of £10,000 per place, awarded and recouped on a monthly basis.

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