

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

**22nd May 2023**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Marie Taylor (Chair), (Finance, local authority ((LA)), Grant Davis (Finance, LA), Cate Mullen (Head of Inclusion & SEND, LA), Lisa Percy (Chair of SF / Hardenhuish), John Hawkins (Teacher / Governor rep), Catriona Williamson (Mere), Graham Nagel-Smith (Morgan's Vale & Woodfalls), Graham Shore (Deputy Chair SF / Holy Trinity), Anthony Fennell (HNB recovery (LA))

**Apologies:** Helean Hughes (Director LA), Simon Thomas (LA), Gary Binstead (LA), Georgina Keily-Theobald (Downland), John Read (Lyneham), Rebecca Carson (Woodford Valley)

Andy Bridewell (Ludgershall Castle) is now represented by CW at the working group.

1.	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b>  MT welcomed the group to the virtual meeting.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Minutes</b>  There were no outstanding actions.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Matters Arising</b>  There were no matters arising.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Schools Funding (DSG) Budget Monitoring – Financial Outturn 2022/23 (MT)</b></p> <p>MT shared her report &amp; appendices – highlights, underspends in EY will be subject to a post financial year adjustment in June/July 2023 by the DfE. Schools block small underspend offsets the HNB pressures. HNB pressures in line with demand for services and previous years demand patterns – no significant changes since the last report was shared in December.</p> <p>Intention to use some of the EY ringfenced reserve to fund some inclusion in turn contributing to school readiness and inclusion agendas.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Schools Funding (DSG) Budget Monitoring – April Report 2023/24 (MT)</b></p> <p>Unfortunately, MT's report was not ready for the meeting however, headlines are – EY showing a £3m forecast underspend which, will be subject to a DfE adjustment and therefore will not be included in the SF report. Good news in that Wiltshire has the highest proportion of disadvantaged 2-year-olds taking up the EY offer. The HNB overspend is anticipated to be in the region of £13m and potentially small variances in SB and CSSB.</p>	
6.	<p><b>HNB and DBV Update</b></p> <p>MT welcomed Anthony Fennell to the meeting who shared a selection of slides from the DBV information pack and ran through the process and timelines with the group. Of interest were the themes arising from previous tranches – LA's are underestimating future demand, the impact of COVID etc</p> <p>AF asked the group about participation of schools and how best to engage heads in the case study and other work – some of which was happening early in September 2023.</p> <p>LP suggested twilight sessions, making appointments now, inclusion in the HT briefings, using SENCO networks, having open calls. LP reported a significant turnover in secondary heads in September therefore this could prove challenging to do early in the term.</p>	

	<p>MT asked if EY and post 16 leaders should be consulted with? AF agreed this would be worthwhile.</p> <p>MT suggested the invite could go out in LP's name if she was happy with this? (LP confirmed she was happy, and AF agreed to draft and share prior to issue.)</p> <p>GS suggested parent supporter adviser groups might be useful where schools have these – the group agreed this would be a useful addition to any WPCC consultations.</p> <p>AF went on to describe case studies and would try to locate the “ideal outcome” and barriers to this where it wasn't achieved in order to inform the strategy.</p> <p>LP asked what “ideal” meant – financial, child centred, parent or practitioner – AF and CM confirmed that this hadn't been clarified by the DfE.</p> <p>LP raised that 50 cases to review would require preparation / reading time and MT said another concern is IG. CM would speak to other LAS to see how these have been resolved.</p> <p>MT was pleased to tell the group Liz Williams would be joining Wiltshire on 3<sup>rd</sup> July to be the finance lead for HNB.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Verbal Updates – Inspections and Reviews (CM)</b></p> <p>CM briefed the group on the following.</p> <p>LGA Peer Review planned for June 23 with 5 key lines of enquiry.</p> <p>Ofsted CQC Inspection – anticipated - 3 weeks, the first 4 have been published</p> <p>ILACS inspection in childrens social care anticipated.</p> <p>SEND Review improvement plan with partners.</p> <p>FACT – Simon Thomas will attend SF to update on progress.</p> <p>MT mentioned the childrens social care “Stable Homes, Built on Love” DfE consultation with Pillar 1, Family Help - £200m promised nationally should have a positive impact on HNB</p>	
8.	<p><b>Further DfE Consultation Feedback – NFF HNB, PFI, Notional SEN, Exceptional Circumstances, Split Sites, Falling Rolls &amp; Growth Fund, MFG (GD)</b></p> <p>GD updated the group on the DfE's response including some areas where further work is anticipated.</p> <p>LP – clarity on use of notional SEN would be useful for schools.</p> <p>GS – if you look up “notional” in the dictionary – the meaning is “it doesn't actually exist!”</p>	
9.	<p><b>Autumn Consultations (GD)</b></p> <p>GD shared his report recommending the questions for the local consultations and seeking feedback. This will be the only decision paper at the June meeting.</p> <p>MT suggested SF may prefer to approve 0.5% transfer if NFF was affordable &amp; delivering better value reference, so schools are better informed when voting</p> <p>LP wondered if some schools may feel that the 0.5% is not making much of a dent in the overspend, MT highlighted that the transfer had been key in some of the DfE funding negotiations so we would be keen to retain in order to access future support from the DfE. Might be tokenistic but important as it's the DfE view of schools involvement and commitment to finding local solutions.</p> <p>MT need to ensure messaging to schools is strong around recovery.</p>	MT/GD
10.	<p><b>Scheme for Funding LA Maintained Schools 2023-24</b></p> <p>GD provided an update to the group, following a recent communication from the Department for Education. A minor change to section 7.4 – Income from the Sale of Assets was required and will be incorporated into the Wiltshire document.</p> <p>No other changes are required.</p>	
11.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>MT shared with the group that an update on schools capital especially SEN &amp; HNB might be useful for the next meeting.</p>	MT

12.	<b><i>Date and Time of next Meeting</i></b>  The next confirmed Schools Forum meeting after our June meeting will be <b>Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 @ 1.30pm</b> . This is planned as a virtual meeting.  The date of the next meeting of this group is scheduled for <b>Monday 25th September at 8.30am</b> . This is planned as a virtual teams meeting.	
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