

Sefton Schools Forum Minutes

Minutes of Sefton Schools' Forum Meeting

Monday 24th June 2020 1.30pm

TEAMS - Virtual Meeting held

Forum Members present:

In attendance:

Chair: Dorothy Lee-Ogden

Alice Apel, Niki Craddock, Tricia Davies, Cathy Earley, Toni Oxtan-Grant, Sue Kerwin, Anna James, Daniel MacAreavy, Roz Moreton; Ian Parry; Amanda Ryan, Jennifer Taylor, Julian Ward, Erin Wheeler

SMBC Officers present:

Tricia Davies, Kevin McBlain, Nick Carbonaro, Mark Chambers, Nicola Walsh

Others present:

		Actions
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Gil Bourgade; Malcolm Parry; Isobel MacDonald-Davies</p>	
2	<p>Minutes from the last meeting</p> <p>Minutes were agreed</p>	
3	<p>Matter Arising / Issues for further consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members requested a breakdown of the cost of statutory functions of the Local Authority paid out of Maintained Schools funding agreed in January 2020. Members agreed that a report be brought to the December 2020 Schools Forum meeting or earlier, determining the allocation to schools, of the Infant Class size and Pupil Growth funding 	<p><u>ACTION:</u></p> <p>Finance provided a report to 24 June 2020 meeting outlining the details of the costs of Statutory functions paid for by Maintained Schools. Noted.</p> <p>Finance will determine and report accordingly</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration be given to a strategic review on the future use of the PDC given a shortfall in DSG CSSB funding from 2020/21 (£120k); and a LA request for some support funding from Sefton Schools. More analysis is considered necessary before any funding contribution from schools could be contemplated. 	Ongoing issue to be considered
	<p>ITEM 4. DSG Outturn Report 2019/20</p> <p>Kevin McBlain went through the DSG outturn report for 2019/20 outlining the spending across each of the DSG Funding Blocks in the year and highlighting the end of year Centrally retained DSG reserves position, and Schools Balances.</p> <p>Key areas:</p> <p>Schools balances down on 2018/19 by -£2.64m now at £10.226m Centrally Retained DSG balances - 2019/20 Year end Net Deficit stands at £4.385m mostly due to a High Needs overspend of £4.491m in the year.</p> <p>Accumulative DSG Reserves (£4.385m) – year end split:</p> <p>Early Years – Surplus -£0.505m Centrally Retained (CSSB) – Surplus -£0.543m High Needs - Deficit £5.433m</p> <p>Some ringfencing of Early Years reserves in 2020/21 was highlighted in respect of Covid19 support for Providers who remained open to key worker children during lockdown; and also work agreed with the Head of Education Excellence towards a sustainability Plan for Early Years providers.</p> <p>The issue of overspending DSG funding by 1% or more in the year was mentioned. DfE are now working with LA s over the Summer, to determine a new DSG Template planning tool to enable recovery plans to be laid out and discussed in detail at Schools Forums and with other interested stakeholders. Something will be announced in the Autumn. DfE will still require a recovery plan from some LA s this year – yet to be chosen.</p>	Report Noted
	<p>ITEM 5 High Needs consultation and SEN Forum report 10 June 2020</p> <p>Members considered a report taken earlier to the SEN Forum on 10 June, in which was highlighted, a number of key issues. (Debra Vis from SEN spoke to part of this report to update Members on a number of issues)</p> <p>High Needs overspending has continued, unabated, in 2019/20 (£4.491m) with an overall accumulated deficit of £5.433m. Overall DSG Centrally retained reserves are now in deficit to the tune of £4.385m net.</p> <p>Overspending on High Needs is a priority for tackling in 2020/21 and doing nothing is not an option. Forecast ‘doing nothing’ could reach a further £4m leaving a big deficit position that is unsustainable.</p>	Report noted and a 10% SEN Schools Contribution towards High Needs was agreed

SEN Forum have started work across a number of key workstreams and are working to a plan, examining the following areas:

- Expensive Out of Borough Placements and what can be done to reduce these or stem the flow of children placed away from Mainstream provision and start to reduce costs long term.
- Sufficiency- what SEN Places do we need going forward and for which age groups.
- SLA s with Resourced Units to be clear about future funding and responsibilities.
- Examining different resource allocation systems for High Needs support and EHCPs – looking at a Banded system for example
- Examining Special school funding and places.
- Examining Early Years SEN Inclusion funding and future links with High Needs
- Examining costs of Home to School Transport linked to SEN assessments
- Post 16 funding

All these areas are under consideration and will be reported through the SEN Forum and through Schools Forum.

During the Summer Term, SEN Forum agreed that a protocol for High Needs top up funding be set out to Schools by the SEN Team for the next 12 months, to help contain spending whilst the High Needs review is underway. This will broadly involve approval to ongoing SEN Support funding into 2021, where this was due to end. No requirement for Schools to re submit applications for funding during the year. No new applications for funding SEN Support to be received, unless exceptional costs are being incurred for most complex children. These would be dealt with on a case by case basis. Ongoing guaranteed funding for children with EHCPs and for new EHCP children.

Arising from the SEN Forum meeting on 10 June, the Head of Education Excellence proposed, through Headteachers, that a contribution equivalent to 10% of Mainstream Top up values be requested of schools this year, as a one-off contribution, to support High Needs overspending, whilst the review is underway. Members who are the chosen representatives on HT Bodies and other groups agreed to seek approval from HTs for this. MC sent out an e-mail with some calculations of the contribution using either the real 2019/20 SEN Support funding data as the basis for the contribution by schools; or a pro rata calculation using the Schools Funding Formula allocations for each school in 2020/21. The overall effect either way, would be a net contribution from all schools of c. -£0.300m in 2020/21.

Feedback from this request was given verbally on the day of the Schools Forum meeting from those representatives. HTs across Primary and Secondary Phases both agreed to make the contribution, based on the Schools Formula allocations, as being considered the fairest method of apportionment. This works out at 0.1% of Secondary Schools DSG funding, and 0.26% of Primary Schools DSG funding as a contribution. Schools Forum agreed that this contribution would be made by schools on the basis of the HT s agreeing.

A further report was provided and briefly discussed, around measuring the spending by schools on their SEN pupils, using their Notional SEN budget derived from the Schools Formula as a means to balance and

	<p>demonstrate the first £6k of spending by a school on each of its SEN pupils. A Template Return back to Finance has been devised for every school to complete and has been sent out to all schools in the Summer, for completion, in the first instance, by end of October 2020, then termly. Information from this would be brought to Schools Forum periodically.</p> <p>Further progress in these areas will be brought back to Schools Forum through the SEN Forum Group.</p>	
	<p>ITEM 6 Verbal Update Early Years Development Group Meeting – 17 June 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the Lockdown, small grants have been given to those Providers who remained open to key worker children during lockdown to help with loss of parental income and extended opening during the holidays. This was at a cost of around £65k from Early Years DSG reserves. This was agreed with the Head of Education Excellence. • Nurseries have all been paid their Early Years funding according to what would have been normal attendance of children over the Summer Term to help sustain them; and some children have been double funded as necessary during lockdown, where they have had to transfer to alternative Nurseries due to their usual Nursery being closed. This is at an estimated cost of £85k, making a total call on the reserves of around £150k due to Covid. • No funding is forthcoming from the Council's Covid 19 Emergency funding, due to the pressures placed on it mostly by Adult Social Care. • A draft Training Plan to support Early Years provider recovery has been put together, and prioritised – Value £113k for priority items, with a further £12k not considered an immediate priority. This consists of – ELKAN £12k; SALT £60k; SENCOs £21k and Trauma £20k. This is to come out of Early Years DSG Reserves and has been agreed with the Head of Education Excellence. Some items were deferred as not being considered a priority. • A Sustainability and Sufficiency audit of Providers has been carried out over the Summer, with a report back, via a seconded Ofsted employee. Some areas of concern have been expressed, as the costs of childcare rise and Covid affects operating conditions. Further work is required on this. • Requirement to examine the funding of Early Years low level SEN and High Needs children going forward, as part of the High Needs Review. Ez Mills to establish a small sub group to discuss and examine options over the Autumn. 	<p>Noted updates and decisions made by the Head of Education Excellence around Early Years use of Reserves during Covid19 pandemic</p>
	<p>ITEM 7 Verbal update 2021/22 Schools and High Needs funding</p> <p>Kevin McBlain presented a report to update Forum Members on the current position regards the Schools and High Needs funding proposals by the DfE for 2021/22.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial funding levels including a split of High Needs funding promised by the DfE to LA s in July to allow for some planning of budgets. • Ongoing year 2 of proposed £7.1bn funding uplift (£2.1bn in 2021/22) still on track • £4k minimum per pupil funding Primary pupils 2021/22 still on track. • Changes to IDACI Banding to be implemented in 2021/22 through Formula • Some changes to Sparsity funding to be implemented 	<p>Report Noted.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers Pay and Teachers Pensions Employers Grant funding to be included into the Schools Formula 2021/22 in addition to funding growth without affecting MPP and MFG calculations. Schools baselines to be adjusted. • Big consultation on High Needs funding to be brought later in the year/ or early next year via a Green paper. Delays over the Summer due to Covid19. • No 'Hard' Formula in 21/22 • Changes minimal – more details in July with a model APT in September • Y7 Catch up funding to be scrapped this year in favour of £1bn of catch up / tutoring grants to replace it - £0.650m to Schools and £0.350m towards most disadvantaged pupils. Funding to schools to be awarded in three parts spread over Autumn 2020 to Summer 2021 – 2020/21 Academic Year. £0.350m to be applied for by schools as necessary for spending on DfE selected tutors. 	
	<p>ITEM 8 Covid funding issues</p> <p>Reminder to schools to claim their additional costs of Covid in three main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSM if vouchers paid for by the school using their own suppliers other than the Govts Edenred supplier scheme. • Costs of Premises where schools have exceptionally stayed open during holiday periods. • Costs of deep cleansing of a school over and above normal cleaning costs. <p>Deadline for claims before end of Summer Term.</p> <p>Note limits on the size of claims dependent on school size. DfE aren't expecting large claims!</p> <p>FSM scheme extended to over the Summer holidays – separate claims to be made in the Autumn.</p>	
	<p>ITEM 9 AOB</p> <p>Cathy Earley asked for further information to next Schools Forum around governance and who decides for example, how Early Years reserves should be spent</p>	<p>Request noted to be addressed at next Schools Forum as a matter arising</p>
	<p>ITEM 10 - Dates of next meetings across the coming Academic Year 2020/21</p> <p>Proposed date of next 2 meetings (maybe subject to change):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 September 2020 (**CHANGED TO 22 October 2020) • 30 November 2020 <p>Meetings may need to remain as Virtual Teams meetings, subject to the availability of the PDC. Times would be 1.30pm to 3pm but both dates and times may vary dependent on availability of key Officers to meet. Invitations and agendas with reports will be sent out in advance to Forum Members.</p>	<p>Meeting dates for noting – 2020/21 Academic Year</p>