

Notes of High Needs Funding Sub Group

Monday 5 June 2023 - 16.30 – 17.30 via Teams

Present: Paul Walker (Chair), Jackie Ross, Gill Loman, Fay Bowler, Gemma Rolstone, Adrian Hines, Rob Gasson, Keith Bennett, Alan Blackburn, Fay Bowler, Jamie Stone, Heidi Watson-Jones (notes)

Apologies: Penny Hammett, Rob Gammon, Sammy Crook, Alex Walmsley

		Act ion s:
1	Actions and Matters Arising from last meeting (15 May 2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No matters arising 	
2	Finance Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DfE Safety Valve Intervention – DCC colleagues had spent a focus week in May looking at Safety Valve projects. Donna Manson & Angie Sinclair met with DfE on 19/5 re. Safety Valve – Devon has been invited to participate in discussions for Tranche 4 of the Safety Valve programme. This will give the LA the opportunity to develop a refreshed approach, learning from experiences from other LAs recently entering the intervention programme. As at end 22/23 fin year – DSG £11.5m overspent in total (incl. school carry forwards) £38.9m in year high needs deficit. Overall position £3m over planned budget position at year end which is positive given £5m unachieved management action savings. The group noted the current position and expected savings through existing Safety Valve projects. Some projects will continue to operate going forwards, with other areas which will be developed further. ACTION: AF to share presentation with the group 	AF
3	Resource base and Satellite class provisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim: to share with the sub-group a transparent, data-evidenced proposal for further development of resourced provision across the county. Draft proposal for expressions of interest was shared with the group which schools will be asked to complete. The document clearly outlines the LA's operational expectations of the schools applying, including curriculum offer and inclusive practice. Considered implications of school performance – particularly those with poor legacy Ofsted judgements. JR suggested that a MAT-supported application could be made in this case, or a satellite class managed by a special school could ensure that all schools have an opportunity to host. ACTION: JR to ensure satellite classroom definition to be included in the document for clarity. The group sought clarity that the RDD has been involved in the strategic planning process, mindful of previous engagement and refusal to agree significant change required. Noted that children in a satellite class would be on the roll of a special school. The group sought assurance that requirements and regional scrutiny of significant change proposals need to be highlighted for any academy schools applying. Simon Niles has undertaken to liaise with the RDD upon receipt of any expressions of interest. See link below: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057467/Making_significant_changes_to_an_open_academy_January_2022.pdf Noted Local Learning Community (LLC) data sets have been used to identify geographic pockets of SEN need to support rationale for planning the location of resource bases. Will need to be mindful of 'merging' 	JR

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	<p>boundaries which may skew assumptions of need where children cross from one area to another in neighbouring LLCs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindful that school leaders may wish to know more about the impact of hosting a resource base or satellite classroom prior to bidding. Feel it would be helpful to actively approach the schools in areas of identified unmet need, rather than expecting them to submit an expression of interest. Understand that AECOs have been engaging with schools in their areas to raise awareness of the upcoming opportunity. • Considered how schools would apply if there was only a single school in a particular identified location. • An exemplar would be helpful to illustrate to heads the level of detail that the LA is expecting to see. 	
4	<p>Locality-based Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group requested that a strategic presentation on the programme is brought to a future meeting of SFG or DEF to share an overview of the strategic direction. ACTION: HWJ • Post-meeting note: <i>Bids have now been submitted – an independent panel will be convened to consider the submissions.</i> • <i>Further clarity has been requested from school leaders around how the proposals will be funded, governance around the consideration of bids, accountability, reporting expectations and to which body, and how this proposal fits alongside the strategic development of resource bases under Jackie Ross.</i> 	HWJ
5	<p>Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools Finance Group on 10 July scheduled to begin planning of autumn consultation discussions. • Direction on a funding transfer request to be provided through the SEND service lead, which will enable schools to ascertain the impact on individual school budgets of a schools' block transfer. • Noted that a modelling calculator is now available online to illustrate the impact of the 23/24 transfer on school budgets should it have been taken from the schools' block rather than the Growth Fund surplus. • Will be helpful to also explore the impact of the full removal of the school effectiveness grant on schools. • Mindful that Minimum Funding level is likely still to be confirmed by government on 10/7, the outcome of which can have a significant impact on individual school budgets. • Understand that DfE are currently predicting a 3% year on year increase to school budgets. • Will be important to share any relevant information with schools as soon as possible. 	

Future meetings:

- **Mon 26 June (13.00 – 15.00) Face to Face – County Hall – Lucombe House, first floor large meeting room - Updates :** Mth 2 financial position, Safety Valve, Resource bases, Team Around the School.
- **2 meetings per half term from Autumn 2023:**
- Monday 18 September 15.00 – 16.30 (Teams)
- Tuesday 17 October 15.30 – 17.00 (Face to Face)
- Thursday 23 November 09.00 – 10.30 (Face to Face)
- Wednesday 13 December 15.00 – 16.30 (Teams)

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