DEF/23/13 DEVON EDUCATION FORUM

22 November 2023

FINANCE UPDATE

Report of the Director of Finance & Public Value and Director of Children and Young Peoples Futures

Recommendations

It is recommended that Schools Forum:

a) Note the DSG Month 6 position as set out in this report. All to Note

Dedicated Schools Grant and Schools Funding Month 6 Report (2023/24)

Executive Summary

- The Month 6 outturn forecast for 2023/24 sees a significant overspend in the overall Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) of £38.1 million which is associated with the continued demand on High Needs after taking into account management actions savings of £12.2 million identified in the current Safety Valve Intervention management plan.
- The Management Action of £20.2 million reflects the budgeted savings expected to be delivered in 2023/24 and are as per the current Safety Valve submission to the DfE. As at month 6 £9.8 million has been identified as being at risk of not being delivered due to either delays in projects not commencing or no longer happening.
- An additional £2 million savings within the independent sector have been identified from 3-5 year placements ending and Adult Social Care contribution.
- The DSG Adjustment Account, which shows the cumulative DSG Deficit as per government guidance, is projected to rise to £162.5 million by the end of 2023/24.
- The SEN team are continuing to see a high level of requests for EHCP referrals, 1,648 requests have been received for the period January 2023 to September 2023 compared to 1,540 for the same period in 2022, however the number of requests being refused at 6 weeks and 16 weeks has increased since 2022 for the same period. Support from schools is required to take action to mitigate the growing demand
- The increasing DSG deficit could have a considerable impact on future education budgets within the DSG as well as impacting on the financial sustainability for Devon County Council
- An interim SEND Improvement Director is 3 months into a 12-month period from the DfE to work with Devon to drive forward the SEND Improvement Plan and the Safety Valve. Programme Management support has also been identified within the LA to help both support and deliver the SEND Improvement Plan and the Safety Valve.

1. Schools

1.1. In July the revised DSG settlement allocation stands at £310.5 million (after recoupment for academies and direct funded places) based upon pupil numbers as at the October 2022 Schools census and January 2023 Early Years census.

Table 1: Summary of Month 6 forecast position and significant variations

Budget projections as at Month 6	Revised Budget for year	Underlying outturn forecast	Managemen pendi In-year Management Action o/s	ng Savings Plans o/s	Net Forecast Outurn	Forecast outturn variance	Transfer to/(from) deficit reserve	Forecast Adjusted variance	var Total Forecast Savings Plans	of outturn iance Underlying Forecast Outturn Variance	Change from Month 5 Forecast Outturn Variance	Change from Month 4 Forecast outturn variance
Education and Inductor Constant	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Education and Inclusion Services Core Services	11,813	14,299	0	0	14,299	2,486	0	2.496	(646)	3,132	(22)	(220)
School Transport	45,137	14,299 45,068	(174)	0	14,299 44,894	(243)	0	2,486 (243)	(646)	2,528	(22)	(230) (245)
Traded Services	43,137	43,008	(1/4)	0	44,894	38	0	38	(2,771)	38	(243)	(243)
Reserves	729	729	0	0	729	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total General Fund	57,712	60,167	(174)	0	59,993	2,281	0	2,281	(3,417)	5,698	(263)	(440)
	07)722		(=)						(0) / /	0,000	(2007	(
DSG Funding	(132,276)	(131,277)	0	0	(131,277)	999	(999)	0		0	0	0
De-delegated budgets	5,454	5,498	0	0	5,498	44	(44)	0	0	0	0	0
Central School Services Block	4,365	4,287	0	0	4,287	(78)	0	(78)	0	(78)	(10)	(20)
Early Years & Childcare Services	42,989	42,989	0	0	42,989	0	0	0	0	(70)	0	(20)
Total DSG central budgets	52,808	52,774	0	0	52,774	(34)	(44)	(78)	0	(78)	(10)	(20)
		0_,,,,				(0.1)	()	(, 0)		(10)	(/	()
High Needs Budget	133,150	151,138	0	(7,067)	144,071	10,921	(10,921)	0	0	0	0	0
DSG High Needs 22/23 deficit budget prep	(26,227)	0	0	0	0	26,227	(26,227)	0	0	0	0	0
Total High Needs budget	106,923	151,138	0	(7,067)	144,071	37,148	(37,148)	0	0	0	0	0
Total Dedicated Schools Grant	27,455	72,635	0	(7,067)	65,568	38,113	(38,191)	(78)	0	(78)	(10)	(20)
Total Education and Inclusion Services	85,167	132,802	(174)	(7,067)	125,561	40,394	(38,191)	2,203	(3,417)	5,620	(273)	(460)
						·			Total	2,203		

1.2. The working budget is inclusive of other schools grants of £62.5 million.

1.3. The growth fund is forecasting an overspend of £1 million which will be carry forward into 2024/25 as a deficit balance. The overspend is in relation to supporting the Schools Block due to the funding rates not being affordable for Schools due to underlying factors.

2. DSG Deficit Management Plan

Table 2: DSG Adjustment Account

	£'000
DSG Adjustment Account	125,437
DSG High Needs 22/23 deficit	37,148
Total DSG Deficit Reserve	162,585

- 2.1. The DSG Adjustment Account, which shows the cumulative DSG Deficit as per government guidance, is projected to rise to £162.5 million by the end of 2023/24. This is due to the funding pressure identified of £38.1 million and after management actions of £12.2 million.
- 2.2. The DfE and DLUHC have confirmed that no authority across the country will have the ability to borrow to offset their contribution of the Safety Valve. Due to this Devon has now been invited into discussions for tranche 4 of the intervention programme, the draft plan needs to be updated and submitted by mid-December 2023.
- 2.3. This gives the authority the opportunity to update the management plan to reflect the current in year pressures and revisit workstreams in line with the SEND Improvement Plan.

3. High Needs

Table 3: Summary of High Needs budgets and forecast position as at Month 6

	Budget £'000	Mth 6 Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Ring fenced C/fwd £'000	Deficit / (Surplus) Balance £'000	Movement Previous Mth £'000
Alternative Provision	4,256	6,184	1,928	(1,928)	0	(147)
Children in Care and Exclusions	1,730	1,730	0	0	0	0
Improved Outcomes Disadvantaged Children	1,794	1,763	(31)	31	0	(12)
Inclusion	150	150	0	0	0	0
Safeguarding Every Learner	343	335	(8)	8	0	2
SEN Mainstream	22,121	25,476	3,355	(3 <i>,</i> 355)	0	135
FE Colleges	4,129	4,111	(18)	18	0	24
SEN Services	2,719	2,719	0	0	0	0
SEN 100 Project	923	923	0	0	0	0
Maintained & Academy Special Schools	40,217	43,018	2,801	(2,801)	0	509
Hospital Education Services	837	837	0	0	0	0
Recoupment	1,767	1,767	0	0	0	0
Other Special School Fees	49,925	53,509	3,584	(3,584)	0	703
Support Centre Funding	2,239	1,549	(690)	690	0	(34)
Total High Needs Funding	133,150	144,071	10,921	(10,921)	0	1,180
DSG High Needs 22/23 deficit budget prep	(26,227)	0	0	(26,227)	0	0
Total High Needs budget	106,923	144,071	10,921	(37,148)	0	1,180

3.1. Cost and volume variances are shown in Appendix A

Alternative Provision

3.2. Alternative Provision (AP) is currently forecasting an overspend of £1.9 million and predominantly relates to AP Other (forecasting £1.9m overspend) where the number of children being excluded or who are requiring support due to not being able to attend School is rising. This is creating budget

pressures across several High Needs Block budgets but predominantly within Alternative Provision.

- 3.3. 18 Locality Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) partnerships have recently been agreed across Devon to provide school-based inclusion solutions and support children with SEMH and reducing the demand on regulated and unregulated AP Providers.
- 3.4. The main AP WAVE contract is forecasting to overspend by £296,000 which relates to additional special commissioning places being 13 higher than budgeted and costing £407,000, 3.4% additional High Needs Block grant funding that had to be paid to AP Schools, this is in line with High Needs Block operational guidance and totalled £128,000. This was a late change in the guidance and therefore did not form part of the 2023/24 budget setting. The overspend has been offset the average cost being lower than budgeted for both AP Medical and main contract totalling £238,000.

SEN Mainstream

- 3.5. This covers personalised education packages and EHCPs as well as the central SLAs which support them.
- 3.6. Mainstream EHCPs (pre-16) are reporting an overspend of £2.2 million and relates to the nondelivery of Management Action savings out of the identified £4.2 million identified for this financial year. Overall EHCP numbers are currently below the budgeted average 3,415 (vs 3,566 budgeted), resulting in a saving of £186,000.
- 3.7. £186,000 forecast overspend for interim payments where an EHCP has not been issued within 20 weeks.
- 3.8. SEN additional resources is reporting an overspend of £58,000; this is in relation to increase Occupational Health contract and additional resource from September 2023 which will support new ordering of provision in EHCPs which is currently not being delivered.
- 3.9. Children Educated Other than at School is reporting an overspend of £949,000 for Tutoring Specialist provision due to the average cost being £7,189 above the budgeted level. Personalised Budgets are forecasting an overspend of £157,000 due to the average cost being £4,732 above the budgeted level offset slightly by a reduction of 11 pupils (71 vs 82 budgeted).

Maintained and Academy Special Schools

- 3.10. The average numbers on roll including Plus Packages and Exceeded places are forecast at 1,755 (vs 1,769 budgeted). Plus Packages and Exceeded places are 13 above budget resulting in an overspend of £201,000, however this has been offset by a reduction in top up of 28 places and a saving of £664,000.
- 3.11. Place funding has been reduced by a net 12 due to capacity limitations at Orchard Manor and The Promise Tiverton resulting in net savings of £125,000.
- 3.12. 3.4% additional High Needs Block lump sum funding paid to schools as per the operational guidance costing £1.3 million and not included within the budget due to late notification from this DfE of this new requirement for 2023/24.
- 3.13. Forecast assumes £2.3 million management action savings will be achieved in this financial year with £1.4 million forecast as no longer be achieved in this financial year.

Other Special Schools Fees

- 3.14. The Other Special Schools budget includes Safety Valve Management Action of £12.4 million of which £6.2 million has been identified as not being delivered in this financial year, however an additional £1.0 million Adult Social Care funding and £1.0 million 3-5year savings have been identified, resulting in a forecast Management Action savings to be achieved of £8.2 million of which £4.5 million have been achieved to date.
- 3.15. The current placements forecast to March 2024 is 1,315 (after Management Action) which is 51 above budgeted for the year, resulting in an adverse volume variance of £2.0 million, this has been partially offset by a favourable price variance of £420,000 and £2.6 million income from Social Care. Forecast includes planned growth for the remainder of the financial year as agreed with the 0 -25 team.
- 3.16. A commissioning group has been set up with officers across the authority who have expertise in commissioning contracts to review the independent special school fees to ensure we are receiving value for money and that fees are in line with the EHCP of the young person placed at the school.
- 3.17. All spend is currently being reviewed within Other Special Schools to mitigate the growing demand in this sector.

Support Centres

3.18. Support centres are forecasting to underspend by £690,000 which is due to the additional centres planned to be open not opening in this financial year and three of the newest centres not delivering outreach.

4. Management Actions

4.1. A breakdown of the budgeted management actions and current revisions are shown in Appendix B

5. Risks

- 5.1. The SEN Placement continue to cause increase in the demand on the High Needs Block. Support from schools to take action to mitigate the growing demand and reduce the call on independent placements is necessary.
- 5.2. Changes in Senior Leadership both within the Service and wider authority could see delays, advances or change in direction to current plans identified.
- 5.3. The Safety Valve savings identified for 2023/24 as part of the previous plan could see significant slippage due to senior staff changes and delays in revisiting projects.
- 5.4. Staff recruitment and retention is a continued problem for Education Services.
- 5.5. Staff structures under review and other service delivery changes ahead will impact the current forecasts.
- 5.6. Rising demand being seen in Section 19 requests for those children not attending school which is creating additional pressure to the High Needs Block
- 5.7. Realigning the Safety Valve plan with the targets and goals set out in the SEND Improvement Plan
- 5.8. Management actions delayed through increased volumes of requests and placements; new highcost placements moving into the area.

- 5.9. Inclusion in the Safety Valve programme delayed raising uncertainty on ability to achieve outcomes for the children and reduce the overall pressure on the council budget should the deficit form part of the accounts in March 2026.
- 5.10. Quality data being held by the service and being available to be able to track those placements that have an impact on the Management Plan.
- 5.11. Continued stakeholder involvement is key. There is a need to ensure engagement from other directorates of the authority, Members, Health, Schools and the other providers to ensure the mitigation of the identified workstream / projects being achieved. In doing so will increase the children and young people being supported within mainstream settings, whilst reducing the demand currently being seen within the independent sector and stemming the number of EHCPs being required.

6. Recommendations

Schools Forum to

a. Note the month 6 DSG monitoring position as set out in the report. All to Note

Angie Sinclair Director of Finance & Public Value Stuart Collins
Director of Children and Young Peoples Futures

Please ask for: Adrian Fox Adrian.fox@devon.gov.uk

Education & Health Care Plans – Cost and Volume Analysis

Education & Learning - Education & Health Care Plan (EHCP) Cost & Volume Analysis

		No of FYI	E Pupils		Budget 23/24	Forecast outturn	Varia	tion	Budgeted Unit cost		Variation		Month	5	Mont	h 5	Change to	o Mth 5	Month 5	Change
High Needs EHCP Analysis	Budgeted 23/24	Month 6	Variation	%	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£	£	£	Price Var £'000	Vol Var £'000	Total Var £'000	Price Var £'000	Vol Var £'000	Price Var £'000	Vol Var £'000	No of FTE Pupils	to Mth 5 Pupils
T	150	112	(0)	(5.69())	4.070	4 047	(4.54)	(0.40()	12 107	42 700	(204)	(50)	(405)	(464)	(50)			(105)	450	(0)
Top ups Medical Planned Places	150 90	142 90	(8) 0	<mark>(5.6%)</mark> 0.0%	1,978 1,600	1,817 1,600	(161) 0	(8.1%) 0.0%	13,187 17,778	12,796 17,778		(56) 0		(161)	(59) 0	0	3	(105)	150 90	(8)
Medical Planned Additional	90 39	90 40	1	2.5%	762	683	(79)	(10.4%)	19,538	17,778	(2,463)	(99)	-	(79)	(85)	39	(13)	(20)	90 41	(1)
AP WAVE Special Commission	13	40 26	13	2.5% 50.0%	75		(79) 406	541.3%	5,761	17,075	(2,403) 12,739	331		· · ·	331	59 75	(13)	(20)	26	(1)
AP WAVE Special commission AP Other [Non-WAVE]	286	20 184	(102)	(55.4%)	73	2,785	2,060	284.1%	3,255	15,136	12,735	2,186		1,854	1,488	153	698	(485)	333	(149)
AF Other [Non-WAVE]	578	482	(102)	(19.9%)	5,140	7,366	2,000	43.3%	59,519	81,284	21,765	2,100		2,020	1,488	267	688	(483) (610)	640	(149)
Alternative Provision	576	402	(96)	(19.9%)	5,140	7,500	2,220	45.5%	59,519	01,204	21,705	2,303	(545)	2,020	1,075	207	000	(010)	640	(150)
Personalised Packages	82	71	(11)	(15.5%)	1,334	1,491	157	11.8%	16,268	21,000	4,732	336	(179)	157	238	(163)	98	(16)	72	(1)
Home Tutoring	132	132	0	0.0%	1,119	2,068	949	84.8%	8,477	15,667	7,189	949	0	949	949	0	0	0	132	0
Educated Other than at School	214	203	(11)	(5.4%)	2,453	3,559	1,106	45.1%	24,746	36,667	11,921	1,285	(179)	1,106	1,187	(163)	98	(16)	204	(1)
Mainstream Provision (pre 16)	2,448	2,419	(29)	(1.2%)	8,465	8,417	(48)	(0.6%)	3,458	3,480	22	52	(100)	(48)	64	(342)	(12)	242	2,349	70
Mainstream Provision (pre 16) Plus Packages	1,118	2,419 996	(122)	(12.2%)	12,044	10,719	(1,325)	(11.0%)	10,773	10,762	(11)	(11)		(1,325)	_	(1,271)	13		1,000	(4)
Mainstream	3,566	3,415	(122)	(4.4%)	20,509	19,136	(1,373)	(6.7%)	14,231	14,242			(1,415)	(1,373)	· · · ·	(1,614)	1	. ,	3.349	66
Wanstean	3,300	3,413	(131)	(4.470)	20,305	19,130	(1,373)	(0.778)	14,251	14,242			(1,413)	(1,373)	40	(1,014)	1	155	3,345	00
Further Education	879	837	(42)	(5.0%)	4,129	4,111	(18)	(0.4%)	4,697	4,912	214	179	(197)	(18)	155	(197)	24	0	837	0
Top Ups	1,731	1,703	(28)	(1.6%)	23,150	22,486	(664)	(2.9%)	13,372	13,201	(171)	(291)	(372)	(663)	(252)	(278)	(39)	(95)	1,710	(7)
Top Ups Guaranteed	0	10	10	100.0%	0	177	177	0.0%	17,556	17,556	0	0	177	177	0	148	0	29	8	2
Exceeded Places	0		0	0.0%	0		0	100.0%	10,000	0	(10,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plus Packages	38	41	3	7.9%	528	552	24	4.5%	13,895	13,380	(515)	(21)	45	24	(15)	46	(6)	(1)	41	(0)
Maintained & Academy Special Schools	1,769	1,755	(15)	(0.8%)	23,678	23,215	(463)	(2.0%)	54,823	44,137	(10,686)	(312)	(150)	(462)	(267)	(84)	(45)	(67)	1,760	(5)
Sole Funded	1,240	1,300	60	4.6%	60,198	60,294	96	0.2%	49,078	48,869	(209)	(272)	2,928	2,657	177	(2,311)	(448)	5,239	1,193	107
Joint Funded	1,240	1,500	(8)	(74.5%)	1,853	1,054	(799)	(43.1%)	112,280	97,603	• •	(160)	,	(1,070)	(45)	(549)	(115)	(362)	1,155	(3)
Adults	5	5	(0)	(3.5%)	433	438	5	1.2%	86,205	88,856		13		(1,070)	(+3)	(65)	7	50	4	(3)
Independent Special Schools	1,264	1,315	51	3.9%	62,484	61,786	(698)	(5.9%)	247,563	235,328	,	(419)	1 -1	· · · ·		(2,925)	(556)	4,928	1,211	104
Resource Bases (Topup)	92	87	(5)	(6.2%)	816	816	0	0.0%	8,870	9,423	553	48	(48)	o	58	(44)	(10)	(4)	87	(0)
Reported Forecast Outturn 2023/24	8,270	8,007	(263)	(3.3%)	118,393	119,173	780	0.7%				3,138	(281)	2,857	2,927	(4,715)			8,001	6

6

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

Management Plan Savings / Cost reductions

23/24 DSG Management Plan savings / Cost reductions	23/24 Targeted Savings		23/24 revised Savings
Workstream / Management Action	£'000	Workstream lead	£'000
New Specialist Provision			
The Promise, Okehampton Opening Sept 2022	(800)		(64
Glendinning, expanding Sept 2022	(250)		(25
Ace Academy, expanding Sept 2022	(225)		(22
Lampard additional Opening Jan 2023	(480)	Simon Niles / Gill Loman	(16
Marland East-the-Water additional Opening Sept 2023	(467)		(46
Orchard Manor additional Opening Sept 2023	(397)		(39
South/West Devon school Opening Sept 2023	(467) (3,085)	2	(2,13
Support Centre Expansion	(0,000)		(2,10
Support Centre Expansion	(1,360)	Gill Loman	
Support Centre Expansion tota	(1,360)		
SEN 100 Project			
Outreach support in special schools - supporting 250 schools across the year (Year 1: supporting 80 children (25 successful); Year 2-5 supporting 160 children (50 successful)	(1,958)	Robyn Emmerson	(1,30
SEN Support Service - (Supporting children from to stay in Mainstream Yr1 - Sept 22 - 24 children, Yr 2 - Apr 23 - 48 Children & Sept 23 - 72 Children; Yr 3 forwards Sept intake 72 children	(918)		
Outreach support to reduce need for EHCPs (Year 1-2: Supporting 80 children; Year 3 supporting 120 children)	(709)	Vacant (Jeanette Savage)	(70
SEN 100 Project tota	(3,585)	, <i>,</i> ,	(2,01
Independent Sector			
Independent Schools: Ceasing 3-5 yr placements at the end of the summer term	(672)	Sam Plumb	(1,48
Independent Sector Tota	(672)		(1,48
Prevention of more Complex Support requirements			
Prevention of more complex support requirements 5-10 age group and enhanced capacity of 0-25 Tean	(2,252)	Vacant	(47
Team around the School	× / /	Vacant (Jeanette Savage)	
Special Teachers Curriculun	N 1 1	Paul Lamana	(1,45
Education Key Workers	(984)	Matthew Gould	(98
Prevention of more Complex Support Tota	(7,529)		(2,92
Transition to Adulthood			
Pre-16 transition NCY10 & 11	(1,990)	Sam Plumb	(1,32
Post-16 placement	(1,964)	Sann runno	(1,30
Transition phase tota	(3,954)		(2,63
Other			
20 placements - Children's Social Care Funding - Education only costs would see savings for DSG (transfer of costs to LA and Health			(1,00
Mainstream Schools: Claim AWPU back from mainstream schools if child receiving education other than at a mainstream school (as Exclusions	. ,	Matthew Gould	(!
Other tota	()		(1,05
Total Management Plan Saving:	(20,235)		(12,24