

## Schools Forum Minutes

20th June 2024

### Apologies/Membership

Malcom Coe

Stewart Bellworthy

Hannah Baker

Tamsin Summers will be late

Clive Star

Jayne Jones

Nancy Meehan

### Minutes and Actions

Sarah Tomkinson

Agreed

Alex Newton and Steve Hulme did not attend previous meeting.

### Financial Report

Rob Parr

We are currently forecasting an overspend of 848k when we initially did our safety valve plan for this year, we said that we would have a deficit budget of 481,000. In effect we're 367,000 over where we said we would be a couple of years ago, but we have carried forward from the previous year 207,000 in a better position of where we said we would be so we have got a net position of an estimated 160K over where we said we would be at the end of this financial year, it is over where we said we were in the scheme of the safety valve and compared to lots of other authorities we are in a we're in a relatively good position.

The main area of concern is independent special school placements offset by various other little under spends in certain areas.

### Schools Capital Funding

Rob Parr/Claire Talbot

As above

Update on SV is

1. DFE brought forward submission dates by 2 to 3 weeks with no notice (we believe this followed the suspension of 5 LAs payments to bring more scrutiny) this has impacted on our forecast predictions that we believe we could achieve as part of the submissions.

2. luckily our submission was accepted with no challenge, and we have received the first payment of this year.

3. we believe we will be in a position to put forward in the next submission that we have secured some ICB - health funding. we have now in writing a commitment to some funding but are waiting to receive this. on this basis I am confident we will receive out next funding for this year.

Still at risk but ICB have provided funding so agreed.

SH asked re EHCP's going up is due to increase in need in Torbay and concerned that the future of children being affected by the Safety Valve.

RS roughly 45% for refusal. We are still receiving RSA's that at that point in time are deemed kind of not appropriate and they're not going any further.

The numbers of Commission places are still high, but we just can't increase them further. We haven't got the spaces, the physical space either to increase numbers even if we were able to.

RP met with other LA's at a National Safety Valve Peer Group and asked about funding for others to get ICB funding and they were surprised that we got anything as they haven't. We have 119K but it is not in the SV submission.

They've paid 50% of what we've requested from the previous financial year and said that they will get to an agreement in the next six months of how we move forward with getting contributions to EHCP and if they don't meet that deadline, they will give us the other 50%.

Tim asked about changes in level of demand for EHCP's and RSA's and how it will work moving forward.

RS replied we are held to account for figures from 2 years ago. We are not able to challenge.

LF is really pleased we have health funding and asked if this is similar for other authorities or are we doing better than them.

RS. National picture of need is increasing and felt everywhere

RP Depressing knowledge from all LA's and they are trying to avoid the advanced monitoring plan. We are a drop in the ocean compared to others. Devon is a 120 plus million.

LF what can we do. He raises with the DFE at all meetings. Could we lobby new MP's coming in.

RS The lead member agrees that lobbying is the way forward.

DH In the national press yesterday they were talking about across England request free EHCP's have gone up 26% year on year. So, it's not a Torbay picture, it's a picture of nationally against the safety valve that assumes nothing's changed from two years ago.

ST. Gilliam Keegan believes schools are not using the funding correctly.

SB believes only Lib Dems have education in their manifesto. The media would have a bigger influence.

## Schools reducing PAN

Claire Talbot

TS asked is there a way of identifying surplus accommodation.

Not sensible to do in isolation. Can we get a strategic overview? Where is the need and how can we best use it.

CT The landscape changes every year it is very challenging. We have estate that needs improving but not removing.

AN asked how do we make flexibility work when we already have a waiting list.

CT asked to consider class allocation to go over PAN for those on the waiting list.

DH Deep dive into fair access protocol that can be used for children coming into area. Conversation to be had with TASH.

## Capital Programme

## Drop in birthrate

Rachel Setter

Although we have a reducing birth rate across the three towns, it is plateauing slightly this year.

It doesn't account for the number of children that move into area, say for example, currently in early years, we're aware that we have a high level of people moving into area where English is not their first language.

There is a potential offer that we can provide to support that. So, in the early years where English is not the first language, we don't have an offer to support the resources and education required around that.

Rachel met with Devon and the ethnically diverse advisory teacher there, who we currently provide funding for to deliver education to unauthorised encampments. But what we have seen over the last period of time is that the number of those encampments has reduced, so therefore we're not using that full allocation of hours that we have purchased from Devon. That team also provide EAL support and equality, diversity and inclusion and bullying consultations. So, we're going to use some of those hours for to update our website so there'll be a lot of resources on there for education providers, which could also be used by early year settings and information for

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parents. We will have resources and tools available for our maintained schools, there'll be the opportunity to have consultation with the service and for Multi Academy trusts you would be able to purchase those services but at a reduced cost. The person Rachel met is quite keen to come and speak with us – details to be sent, it might be useful for her to come along to Taps and Tash and provide an update on the whole service that they're able to provide.

Rachel advised that the reducing birth rate is one element, but we also know we have a lot of move into area and the challenges that are currently coming with that.

TS Questions parenting differences/cultural differences and how we address/support.

RS It is a conversation outside of this meeting to break down barriers and reduce stigma

LF will the drop be exacerbated by fewer people (birth rate % dropping) – any data looking forward

RS Yes, we have the full JS and A. – is being looked at council wide. Rachel can provide further information.

LF With election it is possible Family Hubs won't continue to be funded.

RS funding in place to March 25.- the big risk is perinatal mental health we are lobbying internally.

Nursery and pre-school sufficiency in light of new funding

Emma Kerridge

See item attached

New entitlements from April this year.

460 children taken up places. We are above average on the 15-hour offer

Dashboard breakdown for Ofsted and CQC

Dan Hamer

AN Conscious that we are without Rachael Williams who is overseeing the progress of schools Rachel Setter/Nancy Meehan are covering

DH Over the last 2 years the government has removed the funding from the LA for school improvement work.

SM When is RW back?

RS Not known at present – she is currently unwell.

Are ASW the right trust to be working with Cuthbert Mayne and how long are they signed up for.

RS another 3 years but much more targeted.

S19 in connection with Hannah's high needs block spend Dan Hamer

DH wants an agreement at TASH to make reasonable adjustments for children with medical needs and reasonable provision for children with medical needs. We are at a position where you have children in school, section 100 happens, but it's a bit invisible in many schools, it's very, very good, but, in some schools, it's less so. And then we get section 19, and it is the middle ground for section 100. We just need to understand better.

DH is asking to approve an audit that would be 0 cost, it is about school's forum support for doing an audit of what is the reasonable adjustments and provision schools are making for children with medical needs, and then asking schools to agree, as in the exemplar.

The extension of the recoupment from not just children at MTS but for children who receive section 19.

He has suggested Jess Hunter to do the audit.

Section 100 is the school's duty to provide.

SM does not agree and is concerned we are just concentrating on costs.

AN Section 19 feels hidden from schools.

DM Section 19 applies to children unable to attend school.

AN worried about the funding imbalance.

DH Even if we took 100% of all the funding for the children currently, it wouldn't pay for what we're spending out. It is not about equivalence and it's not about paying section 19 through recovering from schools. What we're saying is.

Where it says same rate as NTS. So, if you have a child of two days at NTS and nothing else, we recoup 2 days.

Similarly, if you're getting supervisor education for your on-role school, we recoup the bit we provide. If it's MTS, what we're asking is not a change to that principle. We're just asking to apply that across all section 19 provisions.

SH and AN requires update on the Medical Tuition Service

RS currently going through governance and then will come to Schools Forum

SM questions where Schools Forum sits with regard to responsibility to make decisions etc.

RS there are processes that has to be followed before sharing info on MTS

AN questioned costs around children on Section 19 she would need a more robust model on costs

DH asked for costs per child from AN who agreed to do the work if given more detail

ST re audit for section 100 schools may find it difficult as they have their own context and difficult to put a baseline down.

DH to bring something back after working with TASH. Requested primary exercise as well – Jake Grinsill offered

Actions to be fulfilled

AOB

Update from health paying towards the EHCP's

Nancy Meehan

See above

The next meeting is Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 09.00 cancelled

Rearranged to Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024 at 09.30