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NOTICE OF MEETING

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SCHOOLS FORUM

will meet on

TUESDAY, 16TH JULY, 2019

At 2.00 pm

in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL,

TO: MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

REPRESENTATIVES: ISABEL COOKE, RICHARD PILGRIM, HELEN MCHALE, ALISON PENNY, JOOLZ SCARLETT, MIKE WALLACE, CHRIS TOMES, AMANDA HOUGH, STEPHEN MCCORMAC FRANCES WALSH, SARAH COTTLE, ALISON PENNY AND MARTIN TINSLEY.

GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVES: HUGH BOULTER AND JO HASWELL

NON-SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES: ANNE ENTWISTLE

Karen Shepherd – Service Lead - Governance - Issued: 1 Jly 2019

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend Part I of this meeting. The agenda is available on the Council's web site at www.rbwm.gov.uk or contact the Panel Administrator **Wendy Binmore 01628 796251** 01628796251

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AGENDA

PART I

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1.	<u>APOLOGIES</u> To receive apologies for absence.	
2.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> To receive any Declarations of Interest.	5 - 6
3.	<u>MINUTES</u> To confirm the minutes from the previous meeting.	7 - 12
4.	<u>BUDGET MONITORING AND FORECAST 2019/20</u> To receive the above report.	13 - 16
5.	<u>HIGH NEEDS FUNDING - QUALITY ASSURANCE OF RESOURCE BASES AND OUTREACH FUNDS</u> To receive the above report.	17 - 20

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MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a DPI or Prejudicial Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

A member with a DPI or Prejudicial Interest **may make representations at the start of the item but must not take part in the discussion or vote at a meeting.** The speaking time allocated for Members to make representations is at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting. In order to avoid any accusations of taking part in the discussion or vote, after speaking, Members should move away from the panel table to a public area or, if they wish, leave the room. If the interest declared has not been entered on to a Members' Register of Interests, they must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within the next 28 days following the meeting.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit made in respect of any expenses occurred in carrying out member duties or election expenses.
- Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the relevant authority.
- Any licence to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where the landlord is the relevant authority, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
 - a) that body has a piece of business or land in the area of the relevant authority, and
 - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

A Member with a DPI should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations on the item: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Prejudicial Interests

Any interest which a reasonable, fair minded and informed member of the public would reasonably believe is so significant that it harms or impairs the Member's ability to judge the public interest in the item, i.e. a Member's decision making is influenced by their interest so that they are not able to impartially consider relevant issues.

A Member with a Prejudicial interest should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations in the item: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

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Any other connection or association which a member of the public may reasonably think may influence a Member when making a decision on council matters.

Members with a Personal Interest should state at the meeting: ***'I wish to declare a Personal Interest in item x because xxx'. As this is a Personal Interest only, I will take part in the discussion and vote on the matter.***

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Agenda Item 3

SCHOOLS FORUM

THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2019

PRESENT: Martin Tinsley (Chairman), Chris Tomes, Andrew Morris, Hugh Boulter, Sarah Cottle, Amanda Dean, Richard Pilgrim, Frances Walsh and Ian Peters.

Officers: Wendy Binmore, Alison Crossick, Kevin McDaniel, Helen Huntley, Tracey Anne Nevitt and James Norris

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Isobel Cooke, Joolz Scarlett and Mike Wallace.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY THAT: The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2019 be approved.

BUDGET OUTTURN AND SCHOOL BALANCES 2018/19

James Norris, Head of Finance (AfC), introduced the report to the Forum and explained the purpose of the report was to provide a summary of the final outturn position of the Schools Budget 2018/19, the funding held in the DSG reserves and also, the level of maintained school balances held at 31 March 2019. James Norris asked Members of the Forum to note the contents of the report and to approve the carry forward of the deficit balance on the DSG reserve. He explained table one of the report summarised the financial position and showed the full outturn had favourable movements but the high needs block was still seeing budget pressures.

With regards to the high needs block, significant reduction in costs reflected a number of cost saving strategies including 0% inflation increases on providers, successful negotiation rates for new high cost placements, developing a more robust tribunal process and the continuous implementation of a more collaborative and inclusive approach within schools to retain pupils with special educational needs rather than seeking high cost alternative provision. The savings led to cost avoidance of (£327,000); clarity from ESFA of changes in funding arrangements for Further Education and colleges which had previously been in dispute resulting in the release of provision (£102,000); reduction in Alternative Provision Outreach costs following implementation of new contract (£76,000); with others at (£9,000). All of the money had been released into the forecast.

James Norris stated in the last quarter, the overspend had reduced as reported to Cabinet and Council. The overall position was that the net in-year underspend was a favourable movement on the dedicated schools grant reserve deficit which as at 31 March 2018, was a deficit of £1,212,000; the revised deficit as at 31 March 2019 had been reduced to £917,000 gross of earmarked balances.

The Director of Children's Services stated the Borough would be one of the few local authorities to not have to report to the DfE as the Council had a deficit of less than 1%. He went on to say the SEN tribunal process was fair and robust, giving an example of a recent tribunal decision where they agreed with the Local Authority that for one particular child there was suitable educational provision in a maintained school resulting in cost avoidance exceeding £192,000 per annum. If the Borough had been unsuccessful at the Tribunal, it would have meant sending three children to a special placement. Hugh Boulter asked if the Borough and schools had identified all areas where savings could be made. James Norris confirmed work was still ongoing to identify other saving opportunities. The Director of Children's Services state the Council had also held prices of placements down and had appointed an officer to look to try and hold prices down for all placements. The Borough had also received £368,000 extra from central government which had helped.

The Director of Children's Services directed Members to table three of the report which showed the general reserve but there was an earmarked reserve of £134,000 so the official reported position sat at £783,000 in deficit and with effect from 2018/19 the ESFA introduced a new requirement on local authorities that have a cumulative deficit exceeding 1% of their budget allocations.

The Maintained School Balances had gone from £1.9m to £1.4m so there had been a significant year on year impact. There were 30 schools with surplus balances and eight schools with a deficit. Appendix A of the report set out the school by school balances. Members needed to be aware that some schools included their breakfast club budgets into their school budgets so not all schools were compared like for like. Tracey Anne Nevitt, AfC Finance, confirmed all breakfast club funds should be included in school budgets as per government guidelines; if the schools were audited, they would be advised to move breakfast club funds from private funds into school budgets.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Schools Forum noted contents of the report and approved the carry forward of the deficit balance on the DSG reserve.

PREVENTING EXCLUSIONS IN RBWM PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Clive Haines, Schools Leadership Development Manager, introduced the report and explained to Members the purpose of the report was to provide the Schools Forum with a business plan for investing resources to fund an intervention programme for preventing exclusions within the primary sector and with the potential to be rolled out into the secondary sector.

In accordance with the Schools Revenue Funding 2018/19 operation guide, the Schools Forum agreed on 27 November 2017 to a 0.5% budget transfer from the School Block to the high Needs Block representing £416,000. There were no commitments identified in 2018/19, therefore, the funding was carried forward to 2019/20. The Schools Leadership Development Manager added meetings and consultations had taken place. Helen Huntley, AfC, stated she had been working within the borough as a SEND consultant, looking at the use of funds and talking to primary schools. She added that Autism Spectrum Disorder with behaviour issues was where the schools were asking for help.

A template had gone out to schools and heads wanted to get involved but could not see a way the project could be sustainable so more work was required. Since September 2018, there had been five permanent exclusions from primary schools so it had been challenging to respond to. Helen Huntley had met with primary and secondary schools to see how the Borough could support a child at risk of exclusion. If a child was at risk of exclusion and the school were worried, the school could ring the team at the Borough who would support the child and also increase the capacity at the school to help the child and prevent the exclusion.

The scheme used a qualified teacher with two assistant support staff to work with 12 children in 12 schools across one year group. They would help a child to self-regulate and to work with staff in schools to increase capacity and confidence and prevent exclusion. There would also be some cost savings using the approach. Helen Huntley held a BASH meeting and there was interest in developing the project into secondary schools.

There were risks as the project was to only support one year in 12 schools and also, no matter how much support was offered, a child might still be excluded. Also, there could be issues with school resilience, one school might not have capacity to cope with a difficult child but, other schools might fund the child is just a challenging student.

The Chairman stated some of those children had behavioural issues that might have come from home so, they could come into school and all the work done at school could be undone at home. Perhaps an organisation such as Family Friends could work with families at home. Schools also needed consistent understanding of what behaviour was accepted as challenging and what behaviour warranted exclusion. If those issues could be worked on, it could be a way of making the project work.

Helen Huntley explained that the Haybrook College contract covered both primary and secondary schools and a business plan had been produced for resource spaces for children with ASD and challenging behaviour; she did not want to limit the resource to just with ASD. Helen Huntley said she had spoken to the behaviour support team about supporting children currently and they explained that a request had to be made through the early help team first but, this project to prevent exclusions was to be implemented before that so that schools could build up their capacity. The Chairman said it was an early intervention and the earlier the intervention occurred, the better the outcome. Richard Pilgrim asked how the right person would be recruited if it was only a one year contract. Ian Peters commended the role would require staff with a very specific set of skills; it could not be a teacher, would need to be someone that had behavioural experience. Helen Huntley confirmed that if the right people could not be hired, then the project would not go ahead. The Director of Children's Services added the funding would be provided on a year by year basis due to the current deficit. It was harder to offer a permanent position so it would need to be set up as a three year contract and fund year one to start with. The Borough would then need to make savings elsewhere for years two and three of the contract. If the project did not work, then that would be the end of the project. He went on to say while the Borough could not afford it, the project would be worth funding for three years and making it a longer trial period. The Schools Leadership Development Manager stated case studies were needed to provide evidence of the project working. The Chairman commented if it became a cost to the schools to put in place but the first year is proven to work, schools would be open to help fund the scheme. The Director of Children's Services said the team could compare the project with other services to see

what the most effective and efficient route was to help prevent exclusions. The Schools Leadership Development Manager suggested restructuring the behaviour support team to enable the project to go ahead.

Ian Peters stated working with parents at home would be pivotal in getting the project to work. Helen Huntley responded schools referring children that were right on the edge of exclusion would not work, it needed to be those children who were at risk of exclusion but not right at the edge. The project would be 12 schools and 12 children to have the widest impact. The project would not be directed at children with an EHC Plan, it would be aimed at a lower level. The Director of Children's Services explained the paper asked for a one year contract as that was the funding that was available but, he was hearing to get the right person, the team would need to offer a multiple year contract so he was happy to suggest three year funding for the project. The Schools Leadership Development Manager confirmed the project would cost £144,000 for 12 months but that was not linked to when the financial year started, it would be whenever the project started.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Schools forum noted and commented on the contents of the report.

TOP-UP FUNDING HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

Alison Crossick (AfC), introduced the report and explained the purpose of the report was to provide the Schools Forum with the current national and local picture for Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plans, with associated needs and costs. She added the report looked at the likely impact if no changes were made and provided information for consultation relating to Top-up funding for schools in RBWM and also information for consultation around the current matrix and banding for EHC Plans.

Alison Crossick said the Borough would be keeping the matrix the same as Slough and Bracknell councils so that it could work across borders. She had looked at the matrix used by Sussex to see if it would work with Top-up funding for the Borough. Post 16 education was not included in the current proposal, unless the pupil remained on roll at their current school into the sixth form.

The number of EHC Plan's in place had been rising while the number of people designated for support had remained stable. In Windsor and Maidenhead, 16.17% of students required support which was higher than the national average. Alison Crossick was in agreement to look and clarify if other local authorities with grammar schools had a similar percentage of SEND support. She added she would have expected inner city schools with low literacy to have a much higher SEND support rate.

Alison Crossick stated she had been working to a written statement of action. One area she had looked at was work that could be done in local schools to keep children locally. The ratio in and out of the Borough was reasonable but a lot of that was for independent paid for provision.

EHC Plan numbers had been rising nationally and the Borough was in line with the national average. As expected post 18 EHC Plan levels were rising the quickest due to EHC Plans now lasting till the pupil reached 25 years of age, whereas Statements of Education Need only went up to the age of 18 years, so the Borough would start to see lower rates of EHC Plans as the older pupils reached 25.

Table two showed some of the maintained schools special reduced as post 16 went on to special colleges; the Royal Borough EHC Plan population had less than one third in maintained schools with elected home education numbers quite high, so the Borough had assigned an officer to check the primary need of those pupils, and if they could still learn but had left school, they would try and find a suitable placement for them.

Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children's Services stated off-rolling was not a significant issue in the Royal Borough and it was all about finding the right placement for those young people. Chris Tomes stated that at his school, there were some parents that tended to off-roll at the end of year eight or nine and that the numbers were higher than at other local schools. Alison Crossick confirmed that was being looked into.

Alison Crossick said when the Top-up funding changed to the new banding, people were concerned as there were more children to share the money around. A piece of work was done to compare banding regionally and with London local authorities. The piece of work done showed that regional LA's Mainstream Median had annual Top-up values of £4,044; while London LA's Mainstream Median had annual Top-up values of £8,320. Alison Crossick added that table four showed the Borough's median was higher than the national average and was similar to the regional medians but a little higher than London's.

The speech and language contract was going out to tender and that would include all statutory requirements to meet the needs of children and young people with an EHC Plan. Alison Crossick added there would still be a mixed economy with some still on the old banding; but she was getting rid of the band which said no funding provided as it made no sense to state that. The Borough had 299 children with EHC Plans and the funding sitting with that was just under £1.4m and the Borough could give schools more funding to reduce out of Borough placements. Schools would be remunerated appropriately.

The matrix was biased towards behaviour and mental health but there were concerns that the right amounts were not getting to the right pupils; so now with the new matrix, that would be addressed and all new requests were be agreed from September 2019 and would follow the new banding and very old banding would change in a phased timing so funding would not go up or down unexpectedly.

Alison Crossick stated the 81 pupils currently on Band B with £1,479 funding will automatically increase to £2,000 per annum, in September 2019, at an estimated additional cost of £42,201. All other pupils would be reassessed for band level at phase transfer 2010 onwards, unless there was a significant change of need. Pupils still receiving funding at the old banding pre 2017 would be rebranded at the next Annual review or earlier if requested. Alison Crossick added that schools were very good at not applying for EHC Plans for children if they were not needed.

Ian Peters stated the old band seven used to be for those pupils that required one to one support. Alison Crossick responded the Borough was trying to get away from one to one if it was a medical or safety need. If a pupil was in need of one to one for those reasons, they should be classed as exceptional cases and should be banded at band 12. Band eight onwards would be for those children needing a TA or LSA support.

The Director of Children's Services confirmed the Borough should be applying the new banding for the summer term and not waiting for September 2019 but, budgets were overspent so the Borough should only apply it now if it could afford to.

The Chairman commented that schools knew which children were coming through from nursery and which ones may need more support. Alison Crossick responded some parents were not ready for those conversations around special needs and sending their children to special needs schools. Manor Green had agreed to hold three places open for some children in that situation. The Director of Children's Services said legal advice received was that when that situation arose, the Panel agreed that parents could take longer than 15 days to accept an offer of a place at a special school. Conversations were ongoing to support those parents making that decision. Ian Peters said doing that should make for a smoother transition.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Forum

- **Noted and commented on the contents, share and disseminate across all RBWM schools and discussed the preferred options.**
- **Agreed for change of process to be trialled from September 2019 for new EHC assessments and phased transfers for 2020 to be reviewed in April 2020.**
- **Post 16 funding was not in the scope of the current proposal, unless the pupil remains on roll at their current school into the sixth form.**

The meeting, which began at 2.00 pm, finished at 3.35 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM

Date:	16 th July 2019	AGENDA ITEM:	1
Title:	Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2019/20		
Responsible officer:	Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children's Services		
Contact officer:	James Norris, Head of Finance (RBWM) Achieving for Children	Email:	James.norris@achievingforchildren.org.uk

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Schools Forum with:
- The projected financial position for 2019/20 with associated schedule of Risks & Opportunities
 - The projected reserve balance as at 31 March 2020
 - An understanding of the financial pressures which are currently being faced.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools Forum is asked to note:

- 2.1 The Forum is asked to note the contents of this report including the reported variance, schedule of Risks & Opportunities and the projected deficit balance carried forward as at 31 March 2020.

3 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

- 3.1 The current DSG Budget 2019/20 is £63,780,000 reflecting the following in-year budget adjustments totalling a net reduction of £652,000 as shown in table 1. This budget will be updated by the ESFA to reflect the final Early Years and High Needs Block allocations for 2019/20. Budget reductions consist of:
- Increased recoupment for academies direct funding £652,000
- 3.2 The current projected net in-year deficit is £80,000. The material variances are as follows:
- Early Years Block Private, Voluntary & Independent Nurseries clawback settlement 2018/19 estimated at (£250,000) ESFA updated guidance due June 2019
 - High Needs Block £340,000 including Top Up funding £300,000 based on 2018/19 and additional place funding £40,000 reflecting indicative pupil numbers
 - Others net (£10,000)
- 3.3 Table 1 sets out the summarised financial position for 2019/20.

Table 1 Summarised Financial Position

Schools Budget	S251 budget	Less Academy Recoupment	Budget Adjustment 2019	Current Budget	Forecast Variance	Projected Exp/ Funding	Note
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Expenditure							
Schools Block	86,157	(50,669)	(652)	34,836	0	34,836	
Central Block	1,132	0	0	1,132	(10)	1,122	1
Indicative Early Years Block	9,448	0	0	9,448	(250)	9,198	2
Indicative High Needs Block	19,758	(1,394)	0	18,364	340	18,704	3
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	116,495	(52,063)	(652)	63,780	80	63,860	
Funding							
Dedicated Schools Grant	(116,495)	52,063	652	(63,780)	0	(63,780)	
TOTAL FUNDING	(116,495)	52,063	0	(63,780)	0	(63,780)	
NET EXPENDITURE	0	0	0	0	80	80	4
Summary					£000		
Total in year (surplus) / deficit					80		
Balance brought forward DSG general reserve (surplus) / deficit					917		
Net Projected (surplus) /deficit					997		

3.4 The reported material forecast variances are set out below in table 2.

Table 2 Material forecast variances

Note	Comments
1	Apprenticeship Levy contribution lower than budget (£10,000).
2	Early Years Block Private, Voluntary & Independent Nurseries clawback settlement 2018/19 estimated at (£250,000) ESFA updated guidance due June 2019. The level of underspend is not expected to continue into 2019/20 following the agreement at Schools Forum in January 2019 to review the funding model which increased the deprivation element of the formula.
3	High Needs Block £340,000 including Top Up funding £300,000 based on 2018/19 and additional place funding £40,000 reflecting indicative pupil numbers.
4	Projected net deficit on DSG General Reserves for 2019/20 £80,000 (excluding the Risks & Opportunities listed in table 3).

3.5 The summarised material Risks & Opportunities for the current financial year are set out in table 3. These potential material changes to the forecast are not being reported as either there is a degree of uncertainty around them with plans to contain pressures.

Table 3 Summarised Risks & Opportunities

	Variance to Current Budget	Note
	£000	
Expenditure		
Early Years Block	(100)	1
High Needs Block	476	2
Total Expenditure Risks & Opportunities	376	

3.6 The details of the material forecast risks & opportunities are set out below in table 4.

Table 4 Details of Risks & Opportunities

Note	Comments
1	Early Years Block Private, Voluntary & Independent Nurseries total accrual provision for clawback mechanism 2018/19 was (£435,000), prudent clawback settlement for 2018/19 estimated at £185,000 resulting in a release of (£250,000) which is already reflected in the forecast. Latest data suggests potential clawback could result in further opportunity of (£100,000). Potential opportunity identified (£100,000).
2	<p>High Needs Block savings target of £700,000 is built into the budget. In previous years cost saving strategies towards delivering against this target included holding 0% inflation increases on providers, successful negotiation of rates for new high cost placements, developing a more robust tribunal process and the continuous implementation of a more collaborative and inclusive approach within schools to retain pupils with special educational needs. These strategies will continue into 2019/20 and currently are expected to deliver similar savings to previous years. Potential risk identified £200,000.</p> <p>From 2019/20 onwards, funding for special free school places is included in local authorities' high needs allocations. Funding for these places is deducted from local authorities' high needs allocations by the Education Skills and Funding Agency and paid directly to schools. The Education Skills and Funding Agency through the import/export adjustment and further adjustments in the national funding formula ensures that this change will not result in an unfunded cost for local authorities. Local authorities with a special free school will receive £10,000 for every place at the free school through the formula adjustments. The RBWM budget has been built on this basis and the deduction of £600,000 has been transacted, however, the further adjustment of £10,000 per pupil has yet to be allocated. Latest High Needs Block formula allocation suggests funding shortfall of £276,000 notification due July 2019. Potential risk identified £276,000.</p>

4 PROJECTED RESERVE BALANCE

- 4.1 The net overspend will be an additional pressure on the dedicated schools grant general reserve which as at 31 March 2019 was a deficit of £917,000; the revised projected deficit as at 31 March 2020 has increased by £80,000 to £997,000.
- 4.2 The projected reserve balance as at 31 March 2020 of £997,000 excludes the Risk & Opportunities Register net balance of £376,000 overspend, therefore the projected reserve balance as at 31 March 2020 could increase to £1,373,000.

5 MAINTAINED SCHOOLS SERVICE CONTRACTS & DE-DELEGATED FUNDS

- 5.1 The maintained schools have made contributions to Service Contracts and de-delegated budgets for a number of years. In accordance with the Education and Skills Funding Agency Schools Revenue Funding 2019/20 Operational Guide any underspend has been carried forward at year-end. The cumulative balances from April 2016 to 31st March 2019 for the serviced contract and de delegation services are in the region of £62,000 and £273,000 respectively.
- 5.2 To be prudent an element of the balances will be retained in an earmarked account with the remaining being refunded to schools based on contributions into the fund. This refund will be transacted in the autumn term with future balances reviewed annually.
- 5.3 A more detailed analysis will be included in the Schools Forum Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2019/20 report for September 2019.

6 FUTURE ACTION

- 6.1 The level of overspend in the High Needs services remains unaffordable for the Council, therefore, it is important that all local partners continue to work to bring the cost of high needs services back in line with the Government grant allocation.
- 6.2 To drive down costs and deliver efficiencies there were a number of successful cost control measures and savings initiatives implemented in 2018/19 which will continue into 2019/20. In addition to these new strategies including the implementation of the new intervention programme for preventing exclusions within the primary sector will be implemented in 2019/20.
- 6.3 The 2019/20 budget relies on promoting independence and use of the local education offer, managing increasing demand for services through increased early intervention, working with partners to ensure that everyone involved in a child's education is confident in supporting children with additional needs and increasing the amount of local provision as well as ensuring that provision is aligned to need.
- 6.4 The financial trajectory will need to be carefully monitored in 2019/20 to ensure that the level of spending on education services is affordable. Schools Forum and schools will have a clear role in monitoring the position and in implementing the plans in partnership with AfC and the Council.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM

Date:	16 th July 2019		AGENDA ITEM:	
Title:	High Needs Funding - Quality Assurance of Resource Bases and Funds for Outreach services			
Responsible officer:	Clive Haines, Schools Leadership Development Manager, Achieving for Children			
Contact officer:	Helen Huntley SEND Consultant	Email:	Helen.huntley@achievingforchildren.org.uk	

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This paper provides an update on the Quality Assurance process conducted during 2018/19 of the High Needs Block (HNB) funding for four Resource Bases (RBs) in RBWM and for two schools to provide an outreach service to local schools.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools Forum is asked to:

- Note the contents of the paper.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Currently, the LA commissions four mainstream schools to host Resource Provision (RPs) to provide an education for C&YP with SEND and who have an Education Health and Care Plan.

- Charters Secondary School: Physical Disabilities.
- Furze Platt Secondary School (FPSS): Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Riverside Primary School: Speech and Language difficulties
- Wessex Primary School: Hearing Impairments.

- 3.2 Two outreach grants from the HNB have also been provided to:

- FPSS - who have received £180k to support young people in mainstream schools with ASD.
- Manor Green School - who have received £76k to support young people in mainstream schools with complex learning difficulties.

- 3.3 A Quality Assurance process is now in place to ensure that the RPs and the Outreach grants provide Value for Money.

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS – RESOURCE BASES

4.1 Quality Assurance (QA) visits have been made to each of the four Resourced Provisions.

- Charters Secondary School: 21.03.19. Visited by Helen Huntley, SEND Consultant and Helen Cross, CYPD SEND manager.
- Furze Platt Secondary School: 20.03.2019. Visited by Helen Huntley and Kelly Nash, Area SENCo.
- Riverside Primary School: 07.02.2019. Visited by Helen Huntley
- Wessex Primary School: 14.02.19. Visited by Helen Huntley and Jane Peters, Head of Service, Berkshire Sensory Consortium.

4.2 In each case, the school was asked to complete a QA audit tool, based on the current Ofsted Framework which was used as a basis for the visit.

4.3 A range of activities were undertaken including: lesson observations, meeting a range of different staff members including the Headteacher, the RP manager, a pupil voice meeting and feedback from parents.

Outcomes

- It was judged in all cases that the provision offer was effective and that it was good value for money.
- Each school received a report which highlighted the areas of effective practice.
- The report also provided three areas for development which were agreed between the SEND Consultant and the Headteacher of the school.

Future Resource Base provision

4.4 The LA is currently consulting schools on the creation of additional SEND provision to meet the needs of C&YP with ASD / SEMH needs. Decisions regarding this are likely to be made by February 2020.

4.5 Charters is considering widening the remit for its RB to include young people with complex SEND needs.

Next steps in the QA process

4.6 In September 2019, a Service level Agreement (SLA) will be in place for each Resource Base. This will set out the commissioning arrangements for the following year so that schools can budget for any changes. It will also clarify expectations re the Quality of Education provided in the RB as well as what the school can expect from the Local Authority.

4.7 QA visits will be arranged for the academic Year 2019/20. The framework will change to reflect the new Ofsted Framework.

4.8 Decisions regarding entry into the RB will now be determined by a RB Panel

4.9 Decisions made about the top up funding will be made depending on need of the child rather than just a set figure per RB.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE OUTREACH GRANTS

- 5.1 Reports have been received from the schools regarding how this money was spend during the academic year 2017/18. They were asked to comment on:
- Which schools they have been supporting?
 - What intervention strategies they have implemented (related to a specific child as well as training and building capacity within the mainstream setting)?
 - What has been the impact of these interventions?
 - What they foresee them using next year's grant?
- 5.2 In addition to these reports, the LA has received feedback from schools on the use of this service through a questionnaire sent out to schools regarding a range of commissioned services and services provided by the LA.

Outcomes

- 5.3 It has been agreed to continue with the grant to the two schools for 2019/20 as it was felt that money was well spent.

6. Next steps in the QA process.

- 6.1 In September 2019, a Service level Agreement (SLA) will be in place for each school regarding the use of this funding. This will set out the commissioning arrangements for the following year so that schools can budget for any changes. It will also clarify expectations re the use of this funding.
- 6.2 QA visits will be arranged for the academic Year 2019/20 (during the Autumn term) to Quality Assure the use of this funding.
- 6.3 An agreement will then have to be made regarding the continuation of these grants for 2020/21.

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