

SCHOOLS FORUM AGENDA ITEM

For Action For Information

Brief Description of Item (including the purpose / reason for presenting this for consideration by the Forum)

This report asks the Forum to consider the Authority's proposals for Bradford's 2020/21 High Needs Funding Model. A consultation on these proposals was begun on 16 December 2019 and will end on 4 February 2020. These proposals include a new model for the funding of top up (element 3) for EHCPs.

Date (s) of any Previous Discussion at the Forum

The Forum receives regular reports on the development of SEND and Alternative Provision. The Forum has not yet considered the Authority's formal proposals on the High Needs Funding Model for 2020/21.

Background / Context

Please see Appendix 1 (the consultation document itself).

Details of the Item for Consideration

Each year, usually in autumn, the Local Authority, with the agreement of the Schools Forum, publishes three separate consultations on DSG management and formula funding arrangements for the following year. Due to restrictions around the general election, our consultation on High Needs Block funding arrangements has been delayed and our timetable has to adapt to this.

Appendix 1 represents the formal consultation document on High Needs Block arrangements for 2020/21, which has already been published. Appendix 2 (extracted from Appendix 1) lists separately the number of places that Bradford Council expects to commission in Bradford-located provisions. The High Needs Block allocation for 2020/21, shown in Document LG, makes budget provision for these places. Appendix 3 shows how the planned 2020/21 High Needs Block budget is calculated at individual provider level. Members are asked to note that Appendix 3 does not show actual allocations that providers will receive in 2020/21, as these will be based on actual occupancy recorded during the year. Appendix 3 is designed to give the Forum further understanding of how the 2020/21 High Needs Block planned budget is calculated and the impact of the proposed new Banded Model on specialist provisions.

Additional Cost to the High Needs Block of the Proposed New Banded Model / Other Proposals

The estimated additional cost to the 2020/21 High Needs Block planned budget of the changes proposed in the consultation document is:

- The proposed new EHCP Banded Model, applied across all settings, is estimated to cost an additional £3m in a full year. This takes account only of the simple novation of existing EHCPs from current to new system at 1 April 2020 and an estimate of the band position of EHCPs to be newly assessed during 2020/21. The £3m does not include any provision for the development of the model, including where the position of existing EHCPs may be adjusted upwards by the SEND Panel following annual review, appeal or dispute. A specific additional contingency of £2m is held within the 2020/21 planned budget in order to support this.
- The enhancement of the split site factor for maintained special schools and special schools academies is estimated to cost £0.178m across 5 schools.
- The new Day Rate Mechanism for the PRUs, prior to any inflationary uplift, is estimated to cost an additional £0.15m.
- The adoption of the small setting protection factor for the Early Years Enhanced Specialist Provisions in the maintained nursery schools is estimated to cost £0.06m but this will be met from the existing 'flex' in the budget for variable 30 hours provision, so this change is expected to be cost neutral to the planned budget.
- The overall cost of the proposed change in the approach to sharing the cost of specialist equipment is estimated to be in the region of £0.1m, with the existing planned budget increased to £0.2m. The sufficiency of this budget will need to be reviewed as our new approach, if agreed, embeds.

The total estimate of cost to the 2020/21 High Needs Block planned budget (compared against what the 2020/21 planned budget would have been without these changes) is £5.428m. £5m of this cost is related directly to the implementation of the proposed new EHCP funding model.

Implications for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) (if any)

As set out above and in Document LG (main DSG allocation breakdown).

The estimated cost of the proposed changes within the 2020/21 High Needs Block planned budget is £5.428m. These changes therefore, allocate a significant proportion (47%) of the £11.5m increase in our High Needs Block DSG allocation.

Recommendations

- (1) **The Forum is asked to consider the proposals set out in the consultation and to give its feedback on these.**
- (2) **Members are asked to note that the consultation on the High Needs Funding Model will continue to February. It is expected that a final decision on this model will be taken by the Executive and then Council at the end of February so that agreed revised arrangements are in place for 1 April 2020.**

List of Supporting Appendices / Papers (where applicable)

Appendix 1 – Consultation on High Needs Funding 2020/21

Appendix 2 – List of places to be commissioned in Bradford-located settings

Appendix 3 – Modelling of the 2020/21 High Needs Block planned budget at institution level.

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