

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT FORUM

REPORT ON THE HIGH NEEDS BUDGET BLOCK

Wednesday 27th February 2019

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide feedback from the ESFA on the Local Authority's request to transfer funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block Budget in 2019-2020, the decision letter is attached in Appendix A.
- 1.2 To provide details of the Additional Funding High Needs Funding that was provided to the Local Authority by the ESFA on the 18th December 2018.
- 1.3 To provide an update on the High Needs Block Budget Allocation for the 2019-2020 Financial Year.
- 1.4 To provide members of the Schools Management Forum with a copy of the ISOS Report – Developing and sustaining an effective local SEND system (A practical guide for councils and partners) which was recently published. PDF report found in Appendix B.
- 1.5 To provide a copy of the ISOS power-point presentation – Have we reached a 'tipping point'? Trends in spending for children and young people with SEND in England. Power-point presentation found in Appendix C.

2.0 BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 2.1 Members of the Schools Management Forum supported an application being made by the LA to the Secretary of State to transfer 1% of the Schools Block Budget to the High Needs Block Budget as part of the Strategic Budget Recovery Plan developed by the Sub-Group of the Schools Management Forum over the course of the summer 2018.
- 2.2 Judith Walls submitted an application together with all the supporting evidence required by the ESFA by the deadline of 30th November 2018.

3.0 UP-TO-DATE POSITION

- 3.1 The ESFA notified the Local Authority on the 18th December 2018 that they had been allocated £335,506 for two financial years. The LA was asked if the additional funding would make a difference to their Strategic Budget Recovery Plan submitted to the ESFA at the end of November 2018.
- 3.2 After careful consideration Officers wrote to the ESFA to state that although the additional funding was very welcomed it would not make a difference to the Strategic Budget Recovery Plan that had been submitted. The Director of Education proposed to discuss possible uses for the funding with representative head-teachers and senior officers before confirming the position for members of the Schools Management Forum.
- 3.3 A telephone call was received last week to confirm the application to transfer 1% of the Schools Block Budget to the High Needs Block Budget had been successful and today a

letter has been received from the Secretary of State confirming the telephone call and stating that a ESFA SEN Advisor would be contacting the Local Authority in the near future to discuss the High Needs Strategy and offer help with the LA's longer term planning process.

- 3.4 The ESFA have provided the Local Authority with details of the High Needs Block Budget and also the outcomes of the LA's requests to change commissioned places. There are still a small number of queries currently being discussed with the ESFA before they can finalise the recoupment figure for Academies and Post 16 Education Providers for the 2019-2020 financial year.

HIGH NEEDS BLOCK BUDGET 2019-2020			
	2018-2019 £k	2019-2020 £k	Year on year difference £k
ESFA Initial Allocation *	22.435	22.776	+0.341
Transfer from the Early Years Block Budget	0.436	0.455	+0.019
Transfer from the Early Years Block Budget for SEN Inclusion Fund & EY Developments	0.250	0.250	0
Transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block Budget	0.499	1.035	+0.536
Sub-Total High Needs Block Budget	23.620	24.516	+0.896
ESFA Recoupment for Academies and Post 16 Providers	-5.443	TBC	TBC
Total High Needs Block Budget	18.177	TBC	TBC

**Does not include additional £336k High Needs Funding announced Dec 2018 (see para. 3.5 below)*

- 3.5 Judith Walls is currently working with SEND and AP officers to develop the High Needs Block Budget for 2019-2020 financial year as well as updating the High Needs Block Strategic Budget Recovery Plan following decisions made by the ESFA and Officers within the LA. This will initially be shared with the Sub Group who are also considering the uses for the additional £336k before being brought to the next meeting of the SMF.
- 3.6 Further work has been undertaken with AP Officers to ensure that all outstanding queries have been resolved and Trevor Dunn and Judith Walls are due to meet with several schools after the half term holidays

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Members of the Schools Management Forum are asked to note the up-to-date position on the High Needs Block Budget for the 2019-2020 Financial Year.
- 4.2 To note the content of the ISOS report on SEN

Report prepared for the Director of Education Andrea Williams by Judith C Walls
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