



## Bristol Schools Forum

### High Needs Funding Task & Finish Group

## MINUTES

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
High Needs Funding Task & Finish Group	11 May 2021	2:00pm	Zoom
<b>In Attendance</b>			
<b>Bristol Schools Forum Members</b> Tracey Jones (TJ) Aileen Morrison (AM) Ruth Pickersgill (RP) Christine Townsend (CT)		Academy Secondary Head Rep, Venturers Trust Pupil Referral Unit Rep, St Matthias Park Academy Secondary Governor Rep, City Academy Maintained Primary Governor Rep, Whitehall Primary	
<b>Bristol City Council Officers</b> Abioye Asimolowo (AA) Su Coombes (SC) Samantha Flowers (SF) Corrina Haskins (CH) Alison Hurley (AH) - Chair for meeting Vikki Jervis (VJ) Rachael Pryor (RP)		Interim Finance Manager Equalities in Education, School Partnerships Education Programme Manager Clerk to Bristol Schools Forum Director of Education & Skills Head of Service for Accessible City Head of Service for Inclusive City	

		<b>Action</b>
1.	<b>Introductions and purpose of the Group</b>  Following introductions, AH outlined the purpose of the Group as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To input into the DSG Management Plan to ensure co-production and joint ownership.</li> <li>2. To look specifically at high needs block/finance issues relating to the Alternative Learning Provision review and action plan.</li> <li>3. To meet and feedback to Schools Forum on a termly basis for a 12-month period.</li> </ol> The Group noted: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There was a requirement by the DfE for BCC to produce a DSG management plan.</li> <li>2. BCC officers had used the DfE toolkit as a starting point to develop the plan although it was a complex document and some other authorities had decided not to use it.</li> </ol>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The DfE toolkit used language such as “savings” but BCC was clear that it was not a cost saving activity, instead it was about understanding the demands for increased costs, clear forecasting and delivering best value.</li> <li>4. The funding crisis in SEND was a national problem and BCC had also seen a recent increase as a result of being more compliant in terms of processing EHCPs.</li> <li>5. BCC officers had drawn up the first iteration containing baseline information and forecasting based on a “do-nothing” scenario.</li> <li>6. The first step for the Group was understanding and accepting the first iteration of the plan with a view to seeking the support of the Forum to submit the plan to the DfE.</li> <li>7. The Group would not consider the wider ALP review and action plan in advance of the Schools Forum meeting as there were other co-production sessions focussed on the wider plan and it was important for Forum to be focussed on the financial issues within its remit.</li> </ol> <p><b>Review Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The Group agreed the Terms of Reference as circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><b>Nominate Chair for future meetings</b></p> <p>AH asked Schools Forum members to consider chairing future meetings in the interests of co-ownership, stressing the importance for the plan to be co-produced and not led by the Council.</p> <p>AM agreed to take on the role of Chair and this was agreed by the Group.</p>	<p><b><i>AM to chair future meetings.</i></b></p>
2.	<p><b>Overview of DSG Management Plan</b></p> <p>The Group considered the information circulated in advance of the meeting and noted the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The DfE toolkit required some data which was not usually collected and as such, there were potential data inaccuracies and gaps.</li> <li>2. It was important for data to remain confidential until validated.</li> <li>3. The summary forecast predicted that, in a “do-nothing” scenario, the DSG deficit would rise to £35m by 2024.</li> <li>4. Further work was required in some areas e.g. closure of live EHCPs when no longer required such as post-</li> </ol>	



	<p>with officer led baseline; “do nothing” forecast scenario, narrative; validated data and issues raised by the Task and Finish Group.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Narrative to explain the current position and the use of the DfE management toolkit to underpin improvements rather than to make savings.</li> <li>3. Forum to see a plan of ongoing work and timescales with more detail on areas such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. An update on the ECHP matrix and similar works in progress;</li> <li>b. BCC’s response to national concerns about childhood delay in speech and language as a result of the COVID pandemic.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. There was a role for the Inclusion in Education Group as a wider stakeholder as well as Heads and SENCOs being invited to suggest participants to join the Group.</li> <li>5. AM to meet with AH before 8 June to discuss details of the presentation to Forum.</li> <li>6. Moving forward from the first iteration, more input was needed by the Group before the plan could be truly co-owned.</li> </ol>	<p><b><i>AH to meet with AM prior to 8 June SF meeting.</i></b></p>
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The meeting closed at 3.42pm