SCHOOLS FORUM

SYNOPSIS OF MEETING – 1st AUTUMN TERM MEETING 2019

TUESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2019

BUDGET UPDATE 2019-20 AND 2020-21

There has been a net increase in resources of £19,000 due to an increase in funding for High Needs for imports and exports but there is reduction in the Early Years funding. The net change in the budget requirement is a reduction of £48,000 but there is no significant change to the budget position as reported in May 2019. There may be some additional pressures for 2019/20 and 2020/21 in the High Needs spending for the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and for Post 16 in Further Education. The estimate for 2020/21 is that the Designated School Grant (DSG) deficit will increase to £5.449m. The incoming resources for 2020/21 will not be known until December 2019.

The Recovery Plan had been revised based on the latest figures, but there is very little change compared with the plan produced in June 2019.

The Chancellor’s Statement states that there will be additional funding, including High Needs Block funding, but the three-year settlement details have not yet been broken down. The Local Authority (LA) allocation will include for every secondary school a minimum of £5,000 per pupil and every primary school £3,750 from 2020/21 increasing to £4,000 per primary pupil in 2021/22. The government are consulting on making a minimum per pupil funding level to schools mandatory in the LA funding formula. There will be separate funding for teacher pensions and the pay grant.

HIGH NEEDS STRATEGY REVIEW

Social Finance presented their recommendations to members, these were to (i) reconfigure the existing services to provide more targeted interventions; (ii) change the Early Support Fund with targeted funding at the transition to secondary school; (iii) develop the Partnerships with (a) greater parent voice within schools; and (b) free up SENCOs from classroom teaching responsibilities, with dedicated SENCOs across clusters of schools; and (iv) reconfigure High Needs funding, with shared funding and resources, within school clusters.

SCHOOL BALANCES 2019-20

In 2019-20 surplus funding will not be taken from schools, however the schools will need to have a reason for the surplus funds. The Balance Control Mechanism will be reviewed again in 2020-21.

FORWARD PLAN

The next meetings of the Schools Forum are on Wednesdays, 27 November 2019 and 15 January 2020.