

Schools Forum

15th October 2013

Schools Budget Position Update 2013/14

Introduction

1. This paper provides members of the Forum with the current projected outturn position on the Schools Budget based on information to the end of August 2013.

Background / Discussion

2. **Appendix 1** shows the planned spend against the projected outturn for 2013/14 on the Schools Budget as at 31st August 2013, in the prescribed DfE Section 251 reporting format. Overall, there is a £256k underspend forecast at the end of this financial year. The reasons for variances between planned and projected spend are: -
 - a. Line 1.2.5 SEN Support Services. - £67k underspend. Staffing vacancies not being filled.
 - b. Line 1.4.1 Contribution to Combined Budgets - £50k underspend. Contribution to Mental Health and Parenting project not required as covered by existing staff.
 - c. Line 1.7.2 Dedicated Schools Grant b/fwd - £151k underspend. Balance required to fund 2012-13 overspend was lower than anticipated.
3. There is currently no anticipated variance shown against special education needs Top Up funding mentioned in lines 1.2.1 to 1.2.3 in Appendix 1. Members will recall that £500k contingency was set aside to help manage the new arrangements and in-year growth. However, these are considered high risk budget areas which given the nature of spend are volatile and significant in expenditure terms. The introduction of top up funding is new this year as is the responsibility for post 16 high needs funding from DSG, which just commenced this autumn. As such, at the time of writing, the top ups re Post 16 are still in the process of being analysed and finalised. All these factors mean that with further information and experience it will be possible to provide the position with increased confidence in future reports.
4. Any surplus or deficit on the Schools Budget supported by Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is carried forward to the following financial year.

As such, this position will continue to be monitored and will need to be considered as part of the 2014/15 budget.

Recommendation

5. That the Schools Forum note the current financial position on the Schools Budget, particularly the comments around high needs funding.

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