

DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM

9th March 2021

ITEM NO 4

HIGH NEEDS UPDATE

Purpose of Report

1. To update Forum regarding high needs budgets.

High Needs National Funding Formula

2. On the 10th February the Department for Education launched a consultation regarding proposed changes to the High Needs National Funding Formula. This can be accessed on the following link <https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/high-needs-nff-proposed-changes/>
3. The link contains an online survey which has a closing date of 24th March 2021, schools and Forum members are encouraged to respond to the survey.
4. Attached at appendix 1 is a copy of the consultation document.

High Needs Update

5. A verbal update will be given regarding the latest high needs developments.

Budget Recovery Plan

6. As demonstrated to Forum in January, the DfE has produced a tool for monitoring and reporting the DSG deficit position. The summary position from Darlington's DfE tool is attached at appendix 2.
7. The DfE tool shows the high needs budgets for 2021/22 to 2023/24 as per the high needs recovery plan. Members should note that the DfE template is after recoupment and has other adjustments to the high needs budgets, however the proposed in year bottom line budget position for each year matches with the previously shared recovery plan.
8. The DfE tool is a working document and at present high needs has been the main inputs. The tool will be updated regularly, with projected spends across all four blocks of the DSG. The document captures financial and activity data. Attached at appendix 2 is the financial summary, Forum members will be presented with updates as well as further detail from the tool at all future meetings.

9. Attached at appendix 2 is the Local Authority's high needs recovery plan for 2021/22 to 2023/24. This was previously shared with Forum in January and provides further detail to the DfE tool. The only adjustment from the plan presented in January is the revised year end brought forward from 2020/21. This document is provided for information and to provide more detail to Forum members.

Recommendations

10. That Forum notes the DfE consultation
11. That Forum notes the high needs budget deficit recovery plan.

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