

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise the Schools Forum of the current projected budget pressures on the 2017-2018 high needs block.
2. To request a £891,000 allocation from the DSG reserve for 2017-2018 only to address this projected shortfall.

Information and Advice

3. The 2017-2018 high needs allocation for Nottinghamshire County Council is £60.4 million. The Education Funding Agency directs the spending of this grant to provide the most appropriate support package for an individual with SEND. In addition to central support services, this funding also pays for alternative provision for pupils who cannot receive their education in schools.
4. Nottinghamshire is a relatively low funded authority and has seen significant pressure on this block for many years. In addition, Nottinghamshire is a 'high devolving' authority with significant funding directly devolved to school partnerships (£3.476M) and a further £12.843M directly through Family SENCo arrangements.
5. Like most other LAs, Nottinghamshire has witnessed an increase in the number of pupils requiring a special school place and access to additional funding. Current monitoring of these pressures suggests a likely shortfall of £0.891million which reflects the pressures as follows:
 - a. Special School places £0.461 million
 - b. HLN panel funding £0.25 million
 - c. Family Network and Additional Family funding £0.18 million
6. The proposed national funding formula, if ultimately confirmed by national government, suggests that Nottinghamshire should see an increase of £4 million by 2019-2020 with an estimated increase of £1.7 million in 2018-2019 due to the capping of gains. It should be noted that these projected increases cannot be fully confirmed at this stage but are indicative figures based on the indicative funding formula and Nottinghamshire's population data held by the EFA in December 2016. Therefore, if Nottinghamshire accesses this increased high needs funding, and pressures on the grant remain static, the indicative allocations from 2018/19 onwards, should be sufficient to meet needs.

7. However, the Forum should note the implications on this funding block that may arise from the opening of AP Free Schools.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Schools Forum:

- 1) That Schools Forum agree the use of £0.891 million from the accumulated DSG reserve to cover projected budget pressures in 2017-2018.

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