

## LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

Meeting / Date	<b>SCHOOLS FORUM</b> <b>18 SEPTEMBER 2013</b>	Agenda Item	<b>5</b>
Report Title	<b>High Needs Block Funding :</b> <b>Proposals for using SEN underspend in 2013-14 and update on places in special schools and academies</b>		
Decision/ Discussion/ Information	For Information and Decision		
Report Author/ Contact details	Rishi Peetamsingh, Group Accountant, 020 8496 6304 <a href="mailto:rishi.peetamsingh@walthamforest.gov.uk">rishi.peetamsingh@walthamforest.gov.uk</a> Shehwar Sultan, Principal Accountant 020 8496 6322 <a href="mailto:shehwar.sultan@walthamforest.gov.uk">shehwar.sultan@walthamforest.gov.uk</a> Graham Moss, Strategic Development Consultant 07962 017 447 <a href="mailto:moss362@btinternet.com">moss362@btinternet.com</a>		
Appendices	Appendix A – 27 June 2013 Report for the High Needs Task and Finish Group. Appendix B – 15 July 2013 Report for the High Needs Task and Finish Group.		

### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The cumulative uncommitted underspend on SEN placements in the three financial years 2010-11 to 2012-13 amounted to **£1.603m**. This report contains a breakdown of the proposals agreed by the High Needs Task and Finish (HN T&F) Group on the use of the underspend. Meetings were held on 27 June 2013 and 15 July 2013 to discuss the use of this underspend in 2013-14 (see Appendices A and B to this report).
- 1.2 At the time of setting budgets for 2013-14, it was recognised that there were significant uncertainties on meeting additional costs within the High Needs Block. This was one of the main reasons for keeping an SEN contingency. Two of these cost risks related to “top up” payments. The placement of pupils in Special Schools and Special Academies in Waltham Forest is unpredictable. Also, Local Authorities are expected to take on additional responsibilities from August 2013 for students aged 16 and over with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD).

- 1.3 This report reviews the position regarding the take up of places at local Special Schools and Academies and this is set out in paragraph 2.7 below.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Schools Forum to re-cap:**

- 2.1 At the meeting in June 2013 Schools' Forum agreed a number of projects in the sum of £105,550 that would benefit from additional one-off funding that the SEN underspend could provide.

### **That Schools Forum agrees to:**

- 2.2 Funding of £50,000 as a contribution to the start-up costs to enable Belmont Park Special School to commission a level 1 BTEC Diploma in Basic Construction from John Laing Training from September 2013. See Recommendations by the HN T&F Group 15 July 2013 - Appendix B, Page 4, Section 4 for details.
- 2.3 The setting up of a sub-group with representatives from special schools, colleges, sixth forms, commissioning and 14-19 team. Recommendations by the HN T&F Group 15 July 2013 - Appendix B, Page 3, Section 3 for details.
- 2.4 A sum of £350,000 be allocated from SEN underspend towards the cost of implementing recommendations made by the sub-group in 2.3 above. Recommendations by the HN T&F Group 27 June Appendix A, page 3, section 2 and 15 July 2013 - Appendix B, Page 3, Section 3 for details.
- 2.5 A sum of £200,000 to be allocated towards the cost of four SEN experts to advise and support Head Teachers regarding SEN Reforms. This includes the Local Offer, SEN budgets & Education Health and Care plans. See Recommendations by the HN T&F Group 27 June 2013 - Appendix A, Page 2, Section 1 for details.
- 2.5 The remaining uncommitted SEN underspend of £897,950 be held as a contingency within the High Needs Block for 2013-14 and 2014-15.
- 2.6 A summary of the use of SEN underspend is presented in Table A under section 6.1

### **Schools Forum to note:**

- 2.7 An update on Special School's places in Waltham Forest as set out in the Tables B and C as set out in sections 6.2 and 6.3.
- 2.8 The significant changes relate to Belmont Park school and William Morris school. In the case of Belmont Park, this is explained in note 1. In the case of William Morris, the take up of places is well below expectation, although this may change if more pupils are admitted after September 2013. The Local Authority is looking at its own forecasts

and will discuss any shortfall in placements with the Executive Principal of the Hornbeam Trust, which manages William Morris School.

### **3. REASON**

- 3.1** The rationale for agreeing one-off projects is that it is unlikely that underspends will continue to arise in the foreseeable future. This is at a time when the budgets are under pressure from increased demands. This includes both the population increase and the continuing complexity of needs of children and young people. Members of the HN T&F have carefully considered and agreed a number of projects that would benefit from additional one-off funding which is being provided by 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13 underspends.
- 3.2** The Authority will need to annually review placements at special schools and special academies to determine the allocation of place-led funding. Schools and academies receive the place-led funding regardless of whether pupils attend. If the Local Authority wants to increase the number of places for High Needs pupils, the EFA expects the Local Authority to initially review any over provision of places and consider reducing these at one establishment in order to increase the amount at another.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1** Since 2005 the SEN strategy has been to reduce expensive out of borough specialist places by increasing parental confidence in local special schools. This enables increased funding to become available to mainstream schools by delegating SEN funding and developing resourced provisions. This allows some children with severe and/or complex needs to attend a mainstream school.
- 4.2** The success of the Strategy is demonstrated by reduction in expensive pupil placements and underspends achieved by the SEN placements service. Appendix B to this report gives more insight on how underspends were achieved.
- 4.3** Following the new regulations for 2013-14 Local authorities are now responsible for post 16 education for learners with LDD. The Local authority in collaboration with local Schools and Colleges need to review current practices and pathways to further education.

### **5. PROPOSALS**

- 5.1** The HN T&F group identified the risks from the raising of the participation age for the post 16 students. The Local Authority needs to work collaboratively with Waltham Forest Schools and Colleges to create pathways for post 16 LDD learners. To do this a sub group of the HN T&F group will be created. The sub-group will consider the current provision for LDD students post-16 and post-19. It will report back to the HN T&F Group in February 2014 with proposals for provision that can be commissioned from September 2014. The provision must be sustainable and the allocated funding from the SEN underspend can only be used for start-up costs.

## 6. TABLES

6.1 Table A: Summary of the use of SEN underspend

	£
Cummulative Under Spend Brought Forward	<b>1,603,500</b>
Less: Agreed by Schools' Forum on 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2013 for one-off projects	105,550
Balance Available	<b>1,497,950</b>
Less: BTEC Programme for Post 16 learners in Belmont Park Special School	50,000
Less: Moneys set aside for proposals from Sub-group for Post 16 funding	350,000
Less: Moneys set aside for four SEN Specialists	200,000
<b>Current Carry forward</b>	<b>897,950</b>

6.2 Table B: Comparison of planned places at the beginning of the year against actual filled places

Placement of pupils in Special Schools and Special Academies in Waltham Forest			
Special School	Planned Places (as at 01/04/2013)	Actual Filled Places (average for the year as at July 2013)	Change ('minus' = spare capacity)
	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B-A</b>
Belmont Park	57.92	57.92	0.00
Brookfield House	83.75	83.46	-0.29
Joseph Clarke	85.00	83.42	-1.58
Whitefield	332.33	333.47	1.14
William Morris	156.67	132.20	-24.47
	<b>715.67</b>	<b>690.47</b>	<b>-25.20</b>

6.3 Table C: Comparison of funding for planned places at the beginning of the year against actual filled places.

Funding of placement of pupils in Special Schools and Special Academies in Waltham Forest					
Special School	Funding Projection 01-04-2013	Place-led funding	Top up Funding for WF Pupils	Total Revised Projection	Difference ('minus' = underspend on High Needs Budget)
	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D=(B+C)</b>	<b>A-D</b>
Belmont Park	1,227,667	579,200	765,039	1,344,239	116,572
Brookfield House	1,807,521	837,500	995,778	1,833,278	25,757
Joseph Clarke	1,372,813	850,000	480,083	1,330,083	-42,729
Whitefield	7,513,167	3,323,300	4,221,243	7,544,543	31,377
William Morris	3,135,571	1,566,700	1,303,546	2,870,246	-265,324
	<b>15,056,737</b>	<b>7,156,700</b>	<b>7,765,690</b>	<b>14,922,390</b>	<b>-134,347</b>

Note 1: This difference is caused by funding for looked after children which the LA pays to the school. It is recovered from other LA's hence the overall effect is nil.

## 7. CONSULTATION

Discussions for the use of SEN underspend took place at the meetings with High Needs Task and Finish Group on the 27 June 2013 and 15 July 2013.