

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION**

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Education held on Thursday, 14 February 2019 at 11.30 am at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Suzy Horton (in the Chair)

#### **7. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Tom Coles.

#### **8. Declarations of Members Interests**

Councillor Horton declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as the Vice Chair of Governors at Craneswater Junior School.

#### **9. Dedicated Schools Grant 2018-19 Quarter Three Budget Monitoring**

The report was introduced by Beverley Pennekett, Finance Manager, who highlighted the following matters:

- That Portsmouth's share of additional national funding to support Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in schools amounted to £464,668 in 2018-19 and again in 2019-20. The additional allocation in 2018-19 was offsetting the previously forecast overspend in the high needs block.
- Special school places were expected to overspend by £65,400, which reflected additional places at both the Willows Centre for Children and Mary Rose Academy.

#### **DECISION:**

**The Cabinet Member noted the projected year-end budget position for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at 31 December 2018, together with the associated explanations contained within the report.**

#### **10. Education Portfolio Budget Monitoring Report for the Third Quarter 2018/19**

The report was introduced by Beverley Pennekett, Finance Manager, who highlighted the following matters:

- That a year-end overspend of £209k was forecast at the end of the third quarter.

- The service commenced the year with a portfolio reserve of £437k, against which there were commitments of £216k. The remaining £221k was intended to contribute towards potential pressures during 2018/19.
- The Education budget at the third quarter stood at £4.39m, a decrease of £1m on the second quarter. This was the result of necessary cash limit adjustments to reflect the contribution to capital programme of £1m that was funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
- Home to school transport continued to provide a significant budget pressure, with a projected overspend of £300k.

#### **DECISION:**

**The Cabinet Member noted the Education Portfolio forecast revenue and capital budget positions, as at the end of December 2018, together with the variance and pressure explanations.**

### **11. 2019-20 Element 3 Top-Up Arrangements**

The Finance Manager presented the report and highlighted the following areas:

- That when the 2018-19 budget was set, high needs pressures had been forecast which exceeded the funding allocation so DSG balances were used to meet in-year pressure whilst working with schools to develop proposals for managing the High Needs budget in 2019-20.
- Proposals included the introduction of a banding system for element 3 top-up funding for children with EHCPs in mainstream schools and inclusion centres, as well as a reduction of 1% in special school top-up rates.
- That whilst schools were supportive of the measures, concerns had been raised regarding the overall level of funding.
- Following the Secretary of State's announcement of additional funding, it was proposed to retain the existing top-up rates for special schools, inclusion centres and children with EHCPs in mainstream schools. This would allow officers to monitor the impact of the additional funding and to undertake a new review.
- In advance of any review, Flying Bull Academy had recently highlighted the increasing needs of pupils attending their AP unit, requiring the school to provide additional support and therefore incurring additional costs. Following a review of their business case, an increase to the element 3 top-up from £4,638 to £6,000 per annum was proposed for that unit from September 2019.

#### **DECISIONS:**

**That the Cabinet Member**

- 1.1. **Approved the 2019-20 Element 3 Top-up rates for Special Schools, Inclusion Centres and Alternative Provision settings as set out in Appendix 1.**
- 1.2. **Reversed the decision made on 9 October 2018 to implement the proposed changes to the high needs funding namely:**
  - a. **The introduction of a banding system for element 3 top-up funding for children with EHCPs in mainstream schools.**
  - b. **The introduction of a banding system for element 3 top-up funding for children with EHCPs in inclusion centres.**
  - c. **Reduce special school rates by 1%**
  - d. **To recommission the Outreach contract from September 2019 to achieve a cost reduction of 10%**
  - e. **To make efficiencies in the Portage Plus team in order to release £10,000 of funding.**

## **12. School Modernisation Programme for the 3rd Quarter 2018 - 19**

The Deputy Director of Children, Families and Education presented the report and highlighted the following areas:

- There was one "live" condition project from the 2017-18 programme which was being completed in phases and was expected to be completed by March 2019.
- There were 10 urgent condition projects approved in the 2018-19 programme at the start of the financial year, plus a contingency allowance for urgent emerging works. Seven additional urgent condition projects had been reported since the start of the financial year.

### **DECISION:**

**The Cabinet Member noted the progress on the school modernisation "urgent condition" projects, the secondary school sufficiency projects and the special school sufficiency projects (as set out in the report and in Appendix A).**

The meeting concluded at 12.00 pm.

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Councillor Suzy Horton  
Chair