

Meeting:	Schools forum
Meeting date:	21 October 2016
Title of report:	Looking to the future – interim proposals
Report by:	Schools finance manager

Classification

Open

Key Decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards Affected

County-wide.

Purpose

To update Schools forum on the interim proposals from the Task and Finish Groups and to refer them to the Budget Working Group and the Education Strategic Board for comments in accordance with the terms of reference.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) comments be provided on the merit of each task and finish group proposal contained in the appendices particularly with regard to impact and value for money and proposals referred to the Budget Working Group and the Education Strategic Board;**

- (b) Forum consider whether final proposals should be subject to a final consultation with school governing bodies in March/April 2017 prior to approval by Schools forum in summer 2017;**

Alternative Options

- 1 The task and finish groups have considered a range of actions and proposals as part of their work and their interim proposals are for discussion and consideration today..

Reasons for Recommendations

2. To ensure the proposals from the task and finish groups deliver maximum impact and value for money. To make appropriate use of the £890k Dedicated Schools Grant underspend to improve outcomes for children and young people and to change the pattern of spend for the DSG.

Key Considerations

Background

3. In June 2015 School Forum received a detailed presentation at an informal workshop under the “Looking to the Future” banner setting out the pressures on the education provision and funding streams in Herefordshire for the next five years. In order to plan ahead effectively Schools Forum and the council have responded by commissioning four task and finish groups to consider in detail four broad service areas and report back with proposals. The proposals were expected to improve outcomes for children as well as change the pattern of spend and help address emerging pressures. The task and finish groups are as follows;
 - Outcomes
 - Capital
 - Early Years
 - High Needs
 4. The groups have been charged with making interim recommendations and proposals to Schools Forum in May 2016, and following discussion at the Education Strategic Board, final recommendations by May 2017.
 5. The agreed terms of reference for the task and finish groups are set out in appendix 1.
 6. The interim reports of the task groups are set out in the appendices as follows;
 - Appendix 2 – Outcomes
 - Appendix 3 – Early Years
- The proposals of the high needs task group have been delayed by a recent Ofsted inspection of the county’s SEN provision and the capital strategy is being progressed separately. Reports and proposals on both subjects will be brought to a future meeting.
7. Additionally at this early stage Schools Forum is invited to consider whether there should be any consultation with school governing bodies re the proposals after consideration by the Budget Working Group and Education Strategic Board and prior to Schools Forum considering final proposals in summer 2017.

Community Impact

8. There is no community impact at this stage as the report seeks further comment on the interim proposals. Any community impact will be considered as part of the approval of the final proposals.

Equality duty

9. There are no implications for the public sector equality duty at this stage.

Financial Implications

- 10 The final proposals will need to clearly set out the financial implications particularly for sustainability and exit costs (e.g. redundancy, equipment on-going maintenance). The Budget Working Group will comment further. Funding is limited to £890k underspend in Dedicated Schools Grant reserves and it is essential that spending is constrained to the available funding. The final proposals from task and finish groups will clearly set out the financial implications in their final proposals.

Legal Implications

- 11 The purpose of this report is to seek the Schools Forum's comments on the interim proposals of the Looking to the Future task and finish groups. As such there are no specific legal implications.

Risk Management

- 12 Risks will be managed by the inclusion of a wide membership for each of the task and finish groups and by further detailed consideration of the interim proposals by the Education Strategic Board and Schools Forum. Significant change proposals will be subject to further consultation with stakeholders.

Consultees

- 13 None at this stage.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Terms of reference for task and finish group
- Appendix 2 – Outcomes
- Appendix 3 – Early Years

Background Papers

- None identified.