

Update on High Needs Sufficiency

Key Messages

Forum members are asked to:

- Note the High Needs sufficiency position

1. Introduction/background

- 1.1. Sheffield City Council receives a High Needs Capital funding allocation from central government, to support the development of places for special, educational needs and disabilities.
- 1.2. Sheffield's most recent allocation is provided in paper 4.
- 1.3. This is a significant increase from previous allocations; however, pressures remain.

2. Sufficiency Position

- 2.1. A refreshed sufficiency plan is due to be taken to the Education, Children and Families Policy committee in December 2022. This plan will outline intentions for the next five years.
- 2.2. The focus of this plan will be on delivering sustainable sufficiency, through increasing mainstream inclusion and delivering a controlled growth in special school places.
- 2.3. Current forecasting indicates that approximately 300 special school places are likely to be needed over the next five years.

3. High Needs Expansion Requirement

- 3.1. Modelling work is taking place on potential schemes for the high needs capital investment. This is currently indicating that this funding is likely to be stretched or face a shortfall, to deliver what is needed.
- 3.2. At a headline level, the following areas are currently in scope for this fund.
 - 3.2.1. Integrated Resource Growth.
 - 3.2.2. Adaptations.
 - 3.2.3. Supporting special school sufficiency.
 - 3.2.4. Abnormal costs for special free and alternative provision school bids.
- 3.3. Delivery in each of these areas will focus on delivering sustainable, long-lasting solutions to sufficiency.
- 3.4. As a local authority, we are seeking to avoid short-term solutions in this area.

- 3.5. Due to the challenging funding situation, it is likely that academy trusts will be asked whether contributions can be made to help deliver schemes in some circumstances.
- 3.6. For example, if an integrated resource goes beyond the agreed capital budget, a trust may be asked whether they can provide a contribution to meet the additional cost.
- 3.7. Due to the national and international situation with inflation and supply chain difficulties, all capital schemes face a significantly increased risk of higher costs than anticipated. This means that schemes must focus only on core requirements, and requests for trust contributions to schemes should be regarded as likely.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1. Modelling of the capital requirements should be completed in October.
- 4.2. Further detail against the headline schemes identified is also being completed.
- 4.3. As an example, a citywide communication looking for additional integrated resource schools will take place in October.
- 4.4. The budget itself will be managed through existing governance processes in Sheffield City Council.

5. Recommendations

Forum members are asked to:

- Note the presented sufficiency position.
- Consider interest in further supporting schemes to support special educational needs sufficiency, in partnership with Sheffield City Council.