

FINANCE WORK GROUP REPORT TO FORUM

22nd May 2025



Date of Work Group Meeting: Tuesday 6th May 2025

Items discussed (brief summary of key items):

Minutes and matters arising: The minutes from 4.3.25 were approved.

The Education Strategic Plan will be sent out via Headlines. A report on spend and projected savings to date will be circulated to future FWG and Forum Meetings. FWG members reported that they need sight of the details within reports in order to provide Forum their considered opinion.

Independent Schools placements spend– BT/SF SF updated overall year end position. There have been 125 new placements since April in 44 different providers, 185 in total which is a 20% increase in the last couple of years. Costs are rising by £2m a year. In terms of post-16, costs are fairly stable. Although there are larger numbers it is relatively low in terms of cost. The college is our main provider which is a positive as children are accessing local provision. Attendance is being monitored through commissioning processes. FWG members commented that attendance monitoring is a key element in ensuring value for money is achieved from these placements

Travellers' Children report – NC NC has been approving GRT funding since Lorraine Lord's departure. It is an historical arrangement that Donna O'Carroll supports with. All schools have the opportunity to apply for this funding and reminders are shared in Headlines at the start of each term. The annual fund is £55,000. Schools submit a spreadsheet to show how they intend to use the money, and an evaluation is required at the end of the term

A core group of primary schools usually apply. The money has a good impact at an individual level, but there are sometimes issues with children's attendance.

A FWG Head Teacher comment: School are clear about children who this money can benefit and monitor to ensure there is an impact, although attendance can be a significant issue. The money allows school to do a bit more for those children, ie, additional phonics, education welfare support, etc.

Procurement Update – KM: Report taken as read.

AOB: None raised

MWJ Firmstone 13.05.25