

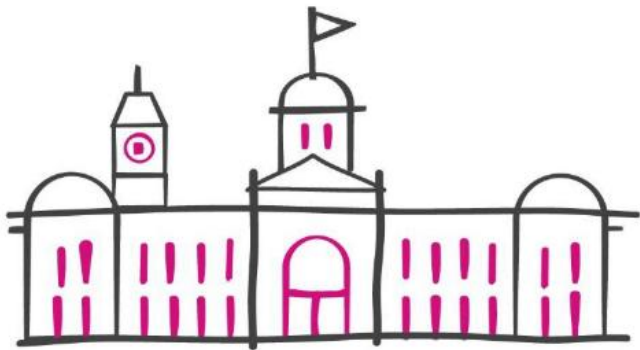
# Schools Forum

## Local Authority Update – December 2023

Sue Harrison – Director Children and Families

Helen Ellis – Director for SEND and Inclusion

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# Agenda

- General Updates
  - The Council's financial position
- Delivering Better Value



# General Updates



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# The Council's financial position

- The financial position of the council remains very challenging.
- A report went to Cabinet on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November setting out a forecast budget gap of £164.8m in 2024/25, rising to £177.1m in 2025/26.
- This means the council must find savings of £200m over the next two financial years (£165m in the 2024/25 financial year and an additional £35m in the 2025/26 financial year).
- The Commissioners have stated that the Council must urgently identify viable savings options for both 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- Draft budget proposals are set to be published in December for formal consultation and public engagement.
- As a directorate we are committed to protecting services for children and families and the council remains committed to our SEND improvement journey.
- Schools will continue to be updated on the council's financial position.



# Delivering Better Value



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# Delivering Better Value in SEND

- Birmingham City Council is participating in the Delivering Better Value Programme. Delivering Better Value (DBV) is a programme working to identify and implement local and national opportunities to improve the outcomes for children and young people with SEND, commissioned by the DfE.
- The evidence base developed will contribute to a grant application to the DfE for up to £1million.
- We are now in Module 3 of the local programme working towards submitting the grant application by 14 December 2023.



# Through wide evidence gathering some key themes emerged

## What we heard

- **Parents did not believe mainstream schools could meet their child's needs**
  - They wanted to see more 1:1 support for their child to express feelings and with emotional needs
  - They want to see greater flexibility and adaptations to curriculum
  - They want their child to feel included and be understood
- **Schools told us they can't meet needs of children in their settings**
  - Providing additional 1:1 time was the top response to what would allow you to more effectively meet need. SENCOs spoke of trying to achieve a whole school approach to SEND and time need to support staff with this mindset shift.
  - Education professionals told us conversations with parents/carers are becoming more challenging, both in terms of them accepting SEN and not being able to offer everything they need
  - Wider facilities and funding were both raised as barriers to being able to more effectively support SEND in settings.



# What are the focus areas for the grant?

1

Developing a shared understanding across the local area including schools and settings about what needs can, and should, be met in mainstream, RB and special schools, in line with the expectations of the national SEND and AP Improvement Plan 2023.

2

Reviewing funding arrangements, including SSPPs, to ensure that there is clarity for schools and settings about how much money they will receive for each pupil and how the decision regarding funding has been made

3

Leadership Development for leaders with responsibility for SEND to ensure alignment and motivation across the system for areas 1 & 2 to succeed.





# What happens next

- Over 600 people from across the sector including parents & carers, education professionals, health, social care and children and young people themselves have engaged with the evidence gathering activities.
- This has been through case reviews, surveys, listening forums, interviews and more.
- Should the grant application be successful, we move to the implementation phase where we will begin co-production to design the changes under the key themes identified. All activity will be aligned with our wider work under the SEND strategy.



# Thank you!



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