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SCHOOLS FORUM

**Briefing on 2 year old places budget carry forward request 2015/2016 financial year**

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| **Lead Officer** | **Philip Frankland** |
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| **Forum asked to decide / steer / be informed** | **For Information ahead of 2015/16 budget** |
| **Time Needed** | **10 mins** |

**Background**

A request was made at the last meeting for more information on the request to carry forward the underspend on the 2 Year Old (2YO) places budget from 2013/14 to 2014/15.

**Places for 2YO children**

These are now established in legislation for up to 40% of children who meet the eligibility criteria who can then access up to 570 hours of early education and childcare in a year. In Bath and North East Somerset over 400 children have applied for a place in the autumn term. This places us in the top 20 of Councils for take up for numbers of children taking a place relative to number of eligible children following the expansion of the scheme in September 2014.

For the financial year 2014/15 the DfE provided a budget of £999,784 to fund the 2YO places. In addition the Forum agreed a carry forward £414,022 from the 2YO budget from the previous financial year to allow for headroom if take of places was higher than anticipated demand and to prevent the budget from having insufficient funds to allocate

In deciding what to do with the carry forward the Forum needs to consider the DfE's decision to move to participation based funding from the 2015/16 financial year. When the DfE announce the DSG in December 2014 it is anticipated that the amount of funding provided to each Council will be based on their previous year’s allocation i.e. £999,794. They will then review the EY census which takes place in January 2015 and, as a “one-off”, an additional voluntary census for 2YO children in October 2015 which it is hoped will capture further growth in take up of the scheme and set subsequent budgets from that data.

Should the Council experience a higher take up than funding allocated in subsequent years any consequent adjustments will only be based on the annual census and funded retrospectively. Therefore it would be prudent to consider carrying forward budget from this financial year into at least the next one to cover growth in demand that will not be covered by the allocation within the DSG for 2015/16.

Based on the current take up compared to the DfEs anticipated number of eligible families there is potential for further growth in the scheme of at least another 100 places. Each full time place is worth £2,850 so 100 more places would be worth £285,000. This would be the recommended carry forward for 2015/16.

The 2013/14 carry forward was £414,022, so if £285,000 is carried forward the balance remaining for the Forum to consider for allocation in the current financial year would be £129,022.